CNMI awarded $17.5M for water/sewer infrastructure. PAGE 2
NMC students vie for leadership positions. PAGE 6

Hafa Adai!

75¢

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'Test not recommended as job requirement'

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Despite the high demand for COVID-19 testing, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. does not recommend that employers make it mandatory for employees to get tested before reporting back to work.

According to Esther Muña, CHCC chief executive officer, COVID-19 is a test of time. That means that, even if you get tested today and the results are negative, you're still at risk of becoming infected. In fact,

See TEST on Page 4

3 possible solutions to NMI's 'troubled economy'

» Blanco says businessman is absolutely right

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Tinian businessman and Board of Education member Phillip Thomas Mendiola-Long is offering three potential solutions for the CNMI's economy, which he describes as "in deep trouble."

In a Facebook post yesterday, Mendiola-Long said it doesn't seem like anyone in leadership is proposing any solutions to save the CNMI at this point and that being creative when pursuing solutions is necessary.

RELATED NEWS
'It's time for NMI to take initiative with food security' PAGE 3

Blanco

Mendiola-Long

"We must get creative," he said. "Our island economy has been tethered, like an addict is to drugs, to the easy importation of just about every consumable item we use on a daily basis."

Mendiola-Long hopes to catch the attention of

See ECONOMY on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, Sept. 16, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	1,927	39	1,966
Recovered	1,274	38	1,312
Active	587	39	626
Deaths	28	0	28
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested	44,485		

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	61	0	61
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested	14,375*		

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted to not report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

VALIANT SHIELD 2020

If you've noticed increased military activity in the skies over the CNMI, it is part of the ongoing military exercise. Forces of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command are participating in Valiant Shield 2020, which started last Sept. 14, and will be held until Sept. 25, in Guam and around the Mariana Islands Range Complex. In this photo, a U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon assigned to the 18th Aggressor Squadron, Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, sits on the flightline in support of Valiant Shield 2020 at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam last Sept. 11, 2020.

U.S. AIR FORCE/STAFF SGT. DIVINE COX

Trump, Biden and the road to 270 electoral votes

By STEVE PEOPLES, KATHLEEN HENNESSEY, and JILL COLVIN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WAYZATA, Minn. (AP)—For such a volatile year, the White House race between President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden has been remarkably consistent.

With Election Day just eight weeks away, Biden is maintaining the same comfortable lead in most national polls that he enjoyed through the summer. He also has an advantage, though narrower, in many of the battleground states that will decide the election. Trump remains in striking distance, banking on the intensity of his most loyal supporters and the hope that disillusioned Republicans

See TRUMP on Page 4

Trump

Biden

Blueprint for future CNMI in the works

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The CNMI Office of Planning and Development headed by director Kodep Ogumoro-Uludong kicked off yesterday a three-day online forum that drew the islands' leaders to

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INSIDE

BUSINESS
Spicy Thai in Garapan is not just about spicy Thai dishes; they also boast a selection of sweets.

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NATION
Hurricane Sally lumbers toward land, threatening as much as 30 inches of rain and historic floods.

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ASIA
Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Cabinet resigned, clearing the way for his successor.

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

CNMI awarded $17.5M for water/sewer infrastructure

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has announced an award of $17,519,000 to the Marianas for water and sewer infrastructure.

A total of $10.4 million of these funds come from a specific set-aside for the Marianas that Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) included in last year's disaster relief act, U.S. Public Law 116-20. The balance of $7.19 million is from funds set aside for the Marianas and other territories in the EPA appropriation for fiscal year 2020, U.S. Public Law 116-94. Sablan has been able to increase the EPA set-aside every year since 2010.

Sablan said it can be frustrating to wait for appropriated funds to reach the Commonwealth. It has been over a year since Congress passed the disaster relief act in June 2019, and nine months since Congress passed the fiscal 2020 appropriation.

"Despite the time lag between when Congress acted and when the executive branch made the award, the money is reaching the Commonwealth when the economy is in bad shape and when this infusion of federal funds can create jobs and put businesses to work," Sablan said. "This $17.5 million is also timely, when so much of our attention is on the need to raise standards for public health and maintain a clean environment. Those are important goals not only for the quality of life of residents, but also to reassure prospective tourists that the Marianas is safe to visit."

Water and sewer funding has been a signature focus of Sablan's work in Congress. In 2010, just a year after he was first elected, Sablan was able to annually increase funding set aside for insular areas within the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act from 0.25 and 0.33%, respectively, to 1.5% in annual appropriations laws. At the time, only about one in four Marianas households had 24-hour access to water from the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

The $7.19 million announced yesterday reflects the increased 1.5% allocation to funds set aside for the Marianas in EPA appropriations. A total of $3.94 million comes from the Clean Water Act and $3.25 million from the Safe Drinking Water Act. The formula increase has brought a total of $85 million to the Marianas since 2010 and is directly responsible for most households now receiving 24-hour water.

In July, Sablan attempted to make the 1.5% set-aside permanent, rather than a change he has to work to get every year. Sablan successfully offered a floor amendment for that purpose to Democrats' sweeping infrastructure bill, H.R. 2, the Moving Forward Act. The House passed the bill, 233-188, but the Republican-led Senate has refused to take action.

The Moving Forward Act also contains $90 million for Marianas school facilities over the next five years, $10 million annually for federal roads in the Marianas, and a $400,000 annual increase for the islands' new public bus system. ***(PR)***

DPW to host LED bulb campaign on Tinian

The Department of Public Works - Energy Division Office will be hosting its **2**020 Tinian Energy-Efficient LED Lighting Promotional and Educational Awareness Campaign on Friday, Sept. 25, 2020, and if needed, will continue on Saturday, Sept. 26, 2020.

The DPW Energy Division through its Energy Education, Efficiency and Conservation Program efforts, will be distributing eight LED light bulbs per household to assist residential consumers reduce the cost of utilities of their homes and to educate the community about the importance of preserving and protecting available natural resources in the environment through energy-efficiency and conservation efforts in the CNMI. LED bulbs will be available for distribution on a **f**irst-come, first-served basis throughout the day while supplies lasts.

On Sept. 25, the event will be held at the Tinian Gymnasium Parking Lot from 9am to 3pm. If necessary, it will be done again the next day at

See DPW on Page 4

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Our Income Guidelines Have Changed

WIC CNMI

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) CNMI WIC Program (WIC) has new income eligibility guidelines. WIC has continued its efforts to ensure food access, breastfeeding support and reassurance for young families during the pandemic. WIC is available to the CNMI's pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants and children under the age of five who are at nutritional risk and who are at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty guidelines below. A pregnant woman is considered two family members.

WIC Income Eligibility Table By Family Size Effective June 22, 2020

Family Members in Household	Yearly Household Income	Monthly Household Income	Twice-Monthly Household Income	Bi-Weekly Household Income	Weekly Household Income
1	$23,606	$1,968	$984	$908	$454
2	31,894	2,658	1,329	1,227	614
3	40,182	3,349	1,675	1,546	773
4	48,470	4,040	2,020	1,865	933
5	56,758	4,730	2,365	2,183	1,092
6	65,046	5,421	2,711	2,502	1,251
7	73,334	6,112	3,056	2,821	1,411
8	81,622	6,802	3,401	3,140	1,570
Each Add'l Member Add	+$8,288	+$691	+$346	+$319	+$160

Note: All WIC Income Eligibility Guidelines are based on GROSS Income, meaning before taxes or other deductions

An individual or certain family members who participate in other benefits programs, such as the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) or Medicaid automatically meet the income requirement.

Become a WIC Client

Call us at (670) 664-4084 to see if you qualify. In this new normal we continue to do remote services, so it is important to have a working number we can reach you at.

Essential Documents for everyone who will be enrolling into the WIC Program

- Identification for adults (Driver's License, Photo ID)
- Child's Identification (Shot Record, Birth Certificate, Crib Card)
- Proof of Income (30 days of recent paystubs, Medicaid card, NAP card)
- Proof of Address (Mail from CUC or NAP card)

For general inquiries about the WIC Program or eligibility, please call us at (670) 664-4084.

Stay informed and up to date with what is going on at WIC by visiting CNMI WIC's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cnmichcc, www.facebook.com/cnmi.wicprogram, or Instagram @cnmi.wic.

WIC is an equal opportunity provider. The program is funded by the United Stated Department of Agriculture (CFDA #10.557, federal award #7NM700NM5).

‘It’s time for NMI to take initiative with food security’

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Seeing the many border closures and other experiences arising from the global experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) believes it is time for the CNMI to take the initiative for its own food security to ensure it is not overly dependent on imported food.

Hofschneider talked about the need for the CNMI to have food security in an interview Monday during which he gave an an update on the slaughterhouse project on Tinian.

The senator said there is a need to establish the food security initiative to give each different islands in the CNMI a stake in it. He cited Rota as an example, saying it is doing great in creating produce such as potato.

“So we need to maximize that potential and support them,” Hofschneider said.

In Tinian’s case, he said, everyone is into cattle ranching. With a new slaughterhouse on the island, Tinian needs to maximize its meat production, he said.

He said Saipan can also be a source of food production. “Example, if we close our borders for three months, we need to figure out how to feed our population here and based on what we have here.” This is why now is the right time to pursue a food security initiative for the CNMI, he added.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

File photo shows TriVan Truck Body and Friesla president Bob Lodder showing details of a mobile meat processing unit to Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) at the company’s production facility in Ferndale, Washington. The unit, which was procured through Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC’s Community Benefit Fund, is already on Tinian for the island’s slaughterhouse project. Tinian is now working with experts to make the facility U.S. Department of Agriculture-certified.

Hofschneider said this is also why he and other Tinian leaders are pushing for the success of the modular slaughterhouse. The way to make it successful, he said, is to make sure to do things in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture codes, food security, and the sustainability of the production of the beef or cattle.

Hofschneider said the slaughterhouse is a pre-fabricated modular unit, but was assembled in Ferndale, Washington and then shipped to a container house. He said the slaughterhouse was procured through Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC’s Community Benefit Fund.

“What the municipality is doing right now is building the components, the shelter and all the other needed components to be able to come closer to opening it for operations,” the senator said. Hofschneider said they still need to get all the other certifications from USDA, which are crucial in operating the facility. “So that’s where it is at right now. We’re working with experts to see how we can have it certified and also making sure that the products, the cattle that are coming in are healthy,” he said.

The senator said certifications are important so when they start the operations of the slaughterhouse, then the meats are USDA certified and deemed safe for consumption.

He said it has been the desire of the Tinian community, primarily the ranchers, to have one slaughterhouse unit, and IPI’s Community Benefit Fund was an opportunity for them to get that.

Hofschneider said that’s his been Ramon Dela Cruz’s vision since he became mayor of Tinian—to have a USDA-certified slaughterhouse operation.

He said when the opportunity arose for the municipality to get one, it so happened that the CBF became the funding source for that. The senator said approximately $450,000 in CBF was donated to the Tinian Cattleman’s Association for the slaughterhouse.

“We would like to open in as quickly as possible but, of course, we cannot [do that] until we have all those certifications,” he said.

Hofschneider said they want to make sure that, if they are going to continue subsidizing the slaughterhouse using government funds, they need to get all necessary elements in place so that when it’s open, it’s sustainable. This, he said, will be enable the producers and ranchers to continue with their grazing and, at the same time, safely and consistently market the end product.

The way they look at it, and because of the limited number of cattle heads, Hofschneider said they are looking at Tinian and Saipan as the main market first for grass-feed beef. Once operations are established, the Tinian Slaughterhouse will have the capacity to process both cattle and pork in an efficient and sanitary manner, Hofschneider

Last August, Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan said the CBF money went to Tinian Cattleman’s Association to procure the slaughterhouse unit for the benefit of the community.

Aldan said the slaughterhouse is already built but yet to open because they want to make sure that they comply with all the requirements.

Last June, the Tinian leadership presented the Strategic Plan for the Tinian Beef Industry to the Tinian community.

High court affirms Aldan’s sexual assault conviction

The CNMI Supreme Court has affirmed the conviction and sentence of John Santos Aldan on the twin charges of sexual assault in the first degree and disturbing the peace but vacated the trial court’s denial of his eligibility for parole.

In its opinion in *Commonwealth v. John Santos Aldan* that the high court issued on Sept. 14, 2020, the high court agreed that the trial court abused its discretion in admitting the DNA evidence, but held that the error was harmless because there existed substantial independent evidence of Aldan’s guilt.

Aldan was convicted by a jury of sexual assault in the first degree and disturbing the peace.

Aldan argued that DNA evidence was wrongly admitted under NMI Rule of Evidence 702(d) because it used an inapplicable database of U.S. mainland DNA samples. The high court pointed out that there existed substantial independent evidence of Aldan’s guilt. This included the victim’s injuries, which were consistent with her testimony, as well as physical evidence found in Aldan’s truck.

Aldan also argued that his sentence was mechanically imposed and insufficiently individualized, and that the court erred in not justifying its denial of his eligibility for parole. The high court affirmed the sentence but vacated the denial of parole eligibility because the trial court did not provide reasons.

The high court’s full opinion is available at https://cnmilaw.org/, 2020 MP 20. ***(PR)***

USCIS to hold webinar for libraries, museums

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is inviting library and museum employees to participate in a webinar on Sept. 24, from 2pm to 3pm Eastern.

Subject matter experts will give an overview of USCIS services and resources, emphasizing the different features of the online filing system, online tools, the new Citizenship Resource Center and electronic educational resources. It will end with a question-and-answer session.

“We are presenting this webinar as part of the federal partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services to provide citizenship and immigration information to library and museum professionals,” a USCIS statement said.

To Register:

Visit our registration page.

Enter your email address and select “Submit.”

Select “Subscriber Preferences.”

Select the “Event Registration” tab.

Complete the questions and select “Submit.”

Once we process your registration, you will receive a confirmation email with additional details.

If you have any questions, or if you have not received a confirmation email within two business days, email public.engagement@uscis.dhs.gov.

To request a disability accommodation to participate in this engagement, email public.engagement@uscis.dhs.gov by Monday, Sept. 21. ***(PR)***

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Tel: (670) 664-2371 I Fax: (670) 664-2408 I Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950

RFQ20-GOV-116

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR A/E SERVICES FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND PRELIMINARY DESIGN OF THE ROTA LANDFILL, SONGSONG VILLAGE, ROTA MP

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lieutenant Governor Arnold I. Palacios through the Capital Improvement Program, (collectively, “Commonwealth”) is soliciting sealed proposals from Qualified Engineers/Consultants to provide engineering services for the Assessment and Preliminary design for the Rota Landfill in Tatagcho, Songsong Village, Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This project will be funded by the 702 Covenant Funding under the Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs.

Procurement procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001, or latest revision thereof. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

Interested parties may pick up the Scope of Work at the Capital Improvement Office located in the Office of Management & Budget, Juan A. Sablan Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan or may request for a copy via email (attn.: Viola Deleon Guerrero at violamarie.cip@gmail.com) during working hours 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Monday through Friday, except on holidays) beginning September 14, 2020. Submittal of all qualifications must precisely follow the submittal requirements identified in the Scope of Work and submittal requirements. A mandatory pre-proposal conference will be conducted via zoom on **Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 10:00 a.m ChST.** All interested parties must submit a notice of intent to participate in the pre-proposal conference by contacting Ms. Viola Deleon Guerrero @ violamarie.cip@gmail.com. Questions regarding this RFQ must be submitted in writing to Ms. Viola Deleon Guerrero via email @ violamarie.cip@gmail.com or fax no. (670) 664-2408 no later than **4:00 p.m. ChST Friday, September 25, 2020.**

Selection of individuals or firms for the provision of services shall be guided by the Commonwealth Department of Finance Division of Procurement & Supply, Procurement Regulations §7070-30.3-305. To qualify, firms must have a valid CNMI Business License, and be currently licensed to practice engineering in the CNMI, and must hold a Certificate of Authorization, if applicable.

Statement of Qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330 or the latest version of Standard Forms and shall not exceed 20 pages excluding appendices. Only CNMI professionally licensed firms with a valid CNMI business license will be considered for this project. Proposals will be evaluated and scored based on the following criteria:

A. Qualifications in the Western Pacific Region, and especially in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands - (25%)
B. Specialized experience and technical competence in the type of work required and previous experience with projects similar in scope - (30%)
C. Past performance on similar projects, including cost control, ability to meet schedules, and quality of completed construction - (30%)
D. Current workload and demonstrated ability to perform the project Scope of Work - (15%)
E. Fee - (0%)

Discussions shall be conducted with the top three ranked firms or with all the firms. After a selection is made, negotiations will be conducted with the highest qualified firm to determine the final fair and reasonable price of the contract for the work to be performed. The selected firm will be subjected to a responsibility and responsiveness determination in compliance with Section 3-301 of the CNMI Procurement Regulations.

Qualifications statements must be sealed and marked **“RFQ20-GOV-116, ASSESSMENT AND PRELIMINARY DESIGN FOR THE ROTAL LANDFILL”** For proposers within the CNMI, one (1) original, one (1) hard copy AND ONE (1) PDF ELECTRONIC COPY (Electronic copy must be in a flash drive) and must be submitted to the Acting Director of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP, **no later than 9:00 a.m., October 13, 2020.** Proposers located outside the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a Notice of Intent to Propose. Notices of Intent to propose must be received by the Acting Director of Procurement and Supply **no later than 9:00 a.m., ChST, on October 13, 2020** and may be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to a.magofna@dof.gov.mp. For proposers located outside the CNMI, one (1) original, one (1) hard copy AND ONE (1) PDF ELECTRONIC COPY (Electronic copy must be in a flash drive) must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country **no later than October 13, 2020**, and mailed to the Acting Director of Procurement and Supply to P.O. Box 510008 C.K., Saipan MP, 96950 and must be received by the Acting Director of Procurement and Supply by **no later than October 22, 2020**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies of the proposal may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

BREACH OF ETHICAL STANDARDS
(To be part of Solicitation for Quotes, ITBs and RFPs)

• Gratuities. It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give or agree to give any employee or former employee, or for any employee or former employee to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a program requirement or a purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter, pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract or to any solicitation or proposal therefore. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(a).

• Kickbacks. It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any payment, gratuity or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor or any person associated therewith as an inducement for the award of subcontractor or order. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(b)

• Contingent Fees. It shall be a breach of ethical standards for a person to be retained, or to retain a person, to solicit or secure government contracts upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage or contingent fee, except for retention of bona fide employees or bona fide established commercial selling agencies for the purpose of securing business. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-730.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in any proposal if, in its opinion to do so would be in the best interests of the CNMI government. All proposals shall become the sole property of the CNMI government.

Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor

Francisco C. Aguon
Acting Director, Procurement & Supply

TRUMP

From Page 1

ultimately swing his way.

Still, both parties are braced for the prospect of sudden changes ahead, particularly as Trump makes an aggressive pitch to white suburban voters focused on safety and fear of violent unrest. It's unclear how well his rhetoric will resonate, but Democrats insist it can't be ignored, especially in the upper Midwest.

That's especially true in Minnesota, a state that hasn't voted for a Republican presidential candidate since 1972. Democrats there say they're increasingly concerned that the state is genuinely in play this year.

"Trump can win Minnesota," said Rep. Dean Phillips, who in 2018 became the first Democrat to win his suburban Minneapolis district since 1960. "It's real. It's absolutely real."

While Trump's campaign is touting a play for Minnesota as a way to expand the electoral map, the president is playing defense in a host of the other battleground states he needs in order to secure the 270 Electoral College votes to keep the White House. Biden's campaign is laser-focused on the states in the Midwest and close by that Trump flipped in 2016 -- Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania -- and also making a robust play for Arizona, a state that hasn't backed a Democratic presidential candidate since 1996.

TEST

From Page 1

the three W's—wash your hands, wait at a distance, wear your mask—are the best preventive measures that employers can enforce with their employees, she added.

Muña also confirmed that the CHCC board has approved to increase the fee for a COVID-19 test from $50 to $300. Since there is a heavy reliance on getting tested, the CHCC board only felt that $300 is a reasonable amount to cover the cost of operation staff, from the collection of specimens to testing, Muña added.

The CHCC board actually approved increasing the cost of the test to $300 back in April. However, CHCC gave a discount and that pushed the cost down to $50. Since then, however, a lot of people who were going on non-essential travel were asking for COVID-19 testing and it was almost overwhelming for the CHCC staff, prompting CHCC to remove the discount and impose the full $300 fee.

The fee of $300 was also decided on what's being sold at market value, which was $250 for just the test but not for the nursing part.

According to her, there has been an overwhelming number of requests to get tested from people who are making nonessential trips. She added that individuals should check with their destinations to confirm if they do need a test to enter. That way, it can lessen the burden for staff who are doing the tests.

Additionally, Muña stated that CHCC will only charge $300 if the test is not "medically necessary" and is not needed for contact tracing and surveillance. This type of testing requires more work, and will also need a doctor's clinical judgment in order to move forward with testing, she said.

Muña explained that tests that aren't clinically ordered by a doctor or through community-based testing are not reimbursable by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. On the other hand, community-based testing and clinically ordered tests will be reimbursable by the insurance company because there is a medical indication and diagnosis, said Muña.

"If there's somebody who, if they think that they've been exposed, they can definitely have a conversation with the provider, and the provider will make that indication and make a decision whether to order the test," said Muña.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also recommends that those who have not been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 do not need to be tested. According to the CDC official website, a negative test does not mean you will not contract an infection at a later time.

In the case of the 17 licensed practical nurses who may possibly exit the CNMI, Muña says that there a total of 26 registered nurses who are still under CHCC: 10 from the Northern Marianas College, seven from Korea, and nine from the Philippines.

BLUEPRINT

From Page 1

craft a comprehensive development plan for the CNMI.

The forum, which started yesterday and will run until Friday via online meetings, aims to craft a document called "Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan" that will serve as the CNMI's blueprint for growth in the next several years.

Speakers and representatives of different government agencies disclosed plans that are being planned to ultimately benefit and guide the CNMI toward a vision of what it means to have a "better community" in the future.

Representatives of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., who were among the guest speakers during the first day of forum, shared current and future plans about power, water and wastewater in the CNMI.

Adrian Reyes, CUC's electrical engineer for its Power Transmission and Distribution Division, said that CUC is committed to providing reliable and environmentally sensitive and effective power, water, wastewater service for the CNMI at the lowest reasonable cost while providing safety to the employees and the community.

"It's important that I mention this because the projects that follow were created with these principles in mind," said Reyes. "…The projects have crucial roles to play in CUC's power development in the CNMI. …This list encompasses CUC's five-year strategic plan and by the dollar amount associated with the projects, these projects are substantial. …CUC has active power, water and wastewater service projects as well as projects in development."

Under his supervision are the power generation and transmission and distribution division. "For power generation, CUC is currently involved in three major projects. … Two of them involve major repairs to CUC's largest diesel engines. The power generation facility has been historically managed via a cost-efficient approach, which means major repairs have been the preferred option over engine replacement," Reyes said. "Two of major repairs [started] this year and are expected to be completed by the early part of next year . …Both engines provide more than 35% of CUC's available power for the Saipan power grid. With the expectation that the CNMI's economy will pick up at the early or mid-part of next year post-pandemic…we will be ready to support the CNMI's economy moving forward.

For the Transmission and Distribution Division, active projects were created to automate meter reading, billing control and focus on replacing mechanical meters with smart meters. "What this means is [that,] not only can CUC benefit from reading power usage along customers' accounts but it also also allows customers to get a grip on their power consumption in their own time 24/7, …monitoring power usage and making appropriate adjustment to fit their financial means," Reyes said.

Since the smart meter's launch, CUC has replaced 2,556 mechanical meters with smart meters, which equates to 20% of total CUC meter inventory. Some 75% of smart meters have been made on residential accounts and the remaining installations have been made on commercial and government accounts, Reyes said.

Notable power projects in development include a new power plant and substation, new diesel engines, a new power plant on Rota, and a solar farm with battery storage on Saipan.

"It is no secret that the CUC 's power plant is old and obsolete in the next five to 10 years. We will be working toward building a 60-megawatt power plant. …What that means for the consumer is, with fuel efficient engines, rates can be minimized and mitigated to a more affordable rate," Reyes said.

Larry Manacop, the associate engineer for CUC's Water and Wastewater Divisions, said the availability and sustainability for CUC water management and sanitation are important to improve efficiency, reduce costs and address future needs. "This goal can be achieved through strong infrastructure planning and effective utility management practices at both water and wastewater systems. …Active water projects include the San Vicente water tank replacement, to be completed by end of September 2020, the Kagman transmission line and booster pump upgrade to be completed in October this year, the Gualo Rai waterline replacement that was completed last month, purchase and installation of water filtration system, the Chinatown waterline replacement…which is 90% complete, and the San Antonio waterline replacement, which is in the 90% phase," he said.

"For wastewater…we are doing a lot of work at our treatment plants and hopefully we will get these to work on top shape in two years' time," he added

Manacop also mentioned that CUC also received $7.3 million from Federal Emergency Management Agency for water mitigation, "…which includes installation of a generator to provide back up powers to about 91 water wells around the island. …We also requested about $4.4 million…which will be used to procure generators to provide back-up power for 32 wells islandwide. This is great because every time a typhoon comes, water services will be back in service after a few days," he added.

The 2nd day of the CNMI Office of Planning and Development will be held today starting at 9am. For more information, go to their Facebook page: CNMI Office of Planning and Development.

ECONOMY

From Page 1

the CNMI Legislature and the administration with his post and inspire them to pursue his suggestions.

For one, Mendiola-Long recommended that the CNMI Legislature amend the state banking law to require all banks in the CNMI to allocate a minimum percentage of their capital investment resources for "local" agriculture production loans.

He also pushed for the Legislature to review the excise tax law and regulations and increase the importation taxes on "local" industries that are created by this capital investment program.

Finally, Mendiola-Long recommended that the CNMI government should exempt all agriculture businesses from the Business Gross Revenue Tax for five years so that the agriculture industry can become mature, prior to the government taxing it.

Asked for comments about Mendiola-Long's post, House Ways and Means Committee chair Ivan Blanco said he read it yesterday morning and that the businessman "is absolutely right."

Blanco said Mendiola-Long's idea of redirecting the bank's Community Reinvestment Act requirements to support the local farming industry is on point.

"We can only succeed by partnering with other stakeholders in the community. I thank Mr. Phillip Mendiola-Long for sharing his business insights," the lawmaker said.

With respect to his first recommendation, Mendiola-Long said these state-required private banking loans, coupled with a newly created Commonwealth Development Authority Agriculture Loan Program would provide capital for agriculture entrepreneurs to open egg farms for locally produced eggs, piggery, chicken, and beef production farms, vegetable farms, bottled water producers, dairy producers, etc.

Regarding his second recommendation, Mendiola-Long cited that the CNMI government should tax imported eggs from the U.S. at a rate that would give locally produced eggs a favorable advantage. "This would enable new companies, who produce and employ locally, to compete on a fair playing field and be protected by a government that finally understands that locally produced products keep our economy going, as opposed to the importation of products, which send our economic dollars and jobs off island," he said.

The businessman said his recommendations will not only help the CNMI's economy by creating local jobs and circulating economic dollars within the CNMI" economy, but it would also provide food security for the islands.

"We would not be dependent on the Matson ships to let us know if our islands will starve or not. We would control our own future by producing locally and not being dependent upon food being delivered to us," he said.

He pointed out that, prior to World War II, the CNMI was such a massive producer of agriculture that all three islands had locomotive train systems and tracks throughout the islands to transport all the produced agriculture.

About 40 years ago, he said, Tinian had a functioning dairy farm that packaged its own produced pasteurized milk up until the 1980's.

"What happened? Why did it all disappear?," Mendiola-Long asked.

The simple answer, he said, is that the CNMI ignorantly allowed low-cost importation of the same exact product that the Commonwealth produced locally.

The businessman said the CNMI allowed the importation of U.S. and Australian milk to undercut Tinian's milk and essentially put the island's only agriculture manufacturing facility (which employed locals) out of business.

"Think bottled water, eggs, vegetables, beef, chicken, pork. …We import all of them, essentially displacing our local ability to produce them locally," he said.

Mendiola-Long said the CNMI can still do this.

"We are all farmers. Iif the government provides a pathway, some of us will choose that path and become great agriculture entrepreneurs," he added.

DPW

From Page 2

the same location but from 9am to 12pm only.

To avail of LED bulbs, residential consumers must present a copy of a valid government-issued identification card and a copy of a most recent utility billing with name on account. If availing for a residential consumer who is unable to do so, an authorization letter from the account holder must be provided. Businesses, rental property owners or landlords are not eligible to receive LED Bulbs.

In addition, due to the continued threat of the COVID-19, consumers are asked to observe applicable health and safety related guidance to reduce the spread of the virus.

For additional questions or information regarding this event, contact Maile Iakopo, reporting specialist, at 664-4480/4. ***(PR)***

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STOCK #F5360055
FWD, 4-Cyl, 1.8 L, Auto, 6 w/Sport Active ECO
Est. Mileage: 76,146, Color: WHITE

$12,995
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STOCK #HU207707
FWD 4-Cyl, 1.6 L, Auto, 6-Spd
Est. Mileage: 29,635, Color: BLUE

$15,995
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STOCK #F9129375
FWD, V6, 3.5 L, Automatic, CVT
Est. Mileage: 42,081, Color: WHITE

$15,995
2015 NISSAN NV200 S
STOCK #FK692305
FWD, 4-Cyl, 2.0 L, Auto, CVT
Est. Mileage: 36,500, Color: WHITE

$16,995
2016 KIA SPORTAGE EX
STOCK #G7875328
FWD, 4-Cyl, GDI, 2.4 L, Auto, 6-Spd
Est. Mileage: 28,260, Color: BLACK

$18,495
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Est. Mileage: 27,200, Color: WHITE

$19,995
2017 KIA SPORTAGE EX
STOCK # H7183083
AWD, 4-Cyl, 2.4 L, Auto, 6-Spd Sptmatc
Est. Mileage: 36,200, Color: BLUE

$19,995
2016 KIA CADENZA
STOCK# G5200548
FWD, V6, GDI, 3.3 L, 6-Spd AT
Est. Mileage:14,688, Color: WHITE

$19,995
2015 NISSAN MURANO S
STOCK #FN237761
FWD, V6, 3.5 Liter, Automatic, Xtronic CVT
Est. Mileage: 32,555, Color: SILVER

$19,995
2017 HONDA HRV EX
STOCK #HM728444
FWD, 4-Cyl, i-VTEC, 1.8 L, Auto, CVT w/Sport
Est. Mileage: 27,591, Color: BLUE

$19,995
2017 NISSAN ROGUE SV
STOCK #HW381082
FWD, 4 CYL 2.5 L, AUTO CVT
Est. Mileage: 28,244, Color: GREEN

$20,995
2019 KIA SOUL SX
STOCK #K7018377
FWD, 1.6L Turbo-GDI L4 DOHC 16 valve, 7-speed auto w/manual mode, Est. Mileage: 14200, Color: SILVER

$21,995
2017 HONDA ACCORD SPORT
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FWD, 4-Cyl, i-VTEC, 2.4 L, Auto, CVT
Est. Mileage: 34914, Color: BLUE

$22,600
2019 KIA SOUL SX
STOCK #K7688404
FWD,Turbo, 1.6 L, Auto, 7-Spd
Est. Mileage: 6,954, Color:GRAY

$22,995
2016 HONDA ODYSSEY SE
STOCK #GB155516
FWD, V6, i-VTEC, 3.5 L, AT, 6-Spd
Est. Mileage: 38,850, Color: WHITE

$23,495
2017 NISSAN TITAN S
STOCK #HN550235
4WD, 5.6L V8, Auto 7 spd
Est. Mileage: 11,088, Color: White

$23,600
2017 KIA SPORTAGE SX
STOCK #H7046774
AWD, 4-Cyl, Turbo,2.0L, Auto, 6-Spd
Est. Mileage: 2,433, Color: BLUE

$23,995
2015 NISSAN MURANO S
STOCK #FN208116
FWD, V6, 3.5 L, Auto, Xtronic CVT
Est. Mileage: 24,992, Color: BROWN

$23,995
2018 NISSAN ROGUE SV
STOCK #JW488216
FWD, 4-Cyl, 2.5 Liter, Auto, CVT Xtronic
Est. Mileage: 15,510, Color: WHITE

$24,995
2016 HONDA PILOT EX
STOCK#GB099963
AWD, V6 i-VTEC 3.5L, AUTO
Est. Mileage: 34,848, Color: SILVER

$24,995
2016 NISSAN MAXIMA SR
STOCK #GC381214
FWD, 24 valve 3.5L V-6, AUTO
Est. Mileage:19288, Color: GRAY

$24,995
2014 FORD EXPLORER XLT
STOCK#EGB05148
4WD, V6, 3.5 Liter, Auto, 6-Spd
Est. Mileage: 27,891, Color: GREEN

$25,995
2015 FORD EXPLORER XLT
STOCK #FGB53375
AWD, V6, 3.5 Liter, Auto, 6-Spd SelectShift
Est. Mileage: 16,500, Color: GRAY

$26,995
2015 NISSAN MURANO SL
STOCK #FN201193
AWD, V6, 3.5 L, Auto, CVT
Est. Mileage: 11,988, Color: WHITE

$26,995
2019 NISSAN ROGUE S SPECIAL ED
STOCK # KW261973
FWD, 4-Cyl, 2.5 Liter, Automatic, CVT
Est. Mileage: 5,800, Color: BLUE

$27,995
2018 HONDA CR-V EX
STOCK #JL007946
2WD, 4-Cyl, Turbo, 1.5 L, Auto, CVT
Est. Mileage: 15,476, Color: WHITE

$28,995
2018 HONDA ACCORD TOURING
STOCK#JA084004
FWD, i-VTEC Turbo 1.5 L, AT 10 SPEED
Est. Mileage: 18,420, Color: GRAY

$32,688
2017 FORD F-150 S CAB 61/2 FT, XL
STOCK #HKC68427
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NMC students vie for leadership positions

A total of 18 students from the Northern Marianas College have announced their intent to pursue student government positions as officers of the Associated Students of NMC or ASNMC. The student elections will be held on Sept. 21 and 22 - 2020.

ASNMC is a student-driven governance body at the college. Its executive cabinet is composed of students who are elected by the student body and serve a one-year term in office. The available positions are president - vice president - secretary - treasurer - and three senators.

The candidates for this year's student leadership elections are:

PRESIDENT:

Aira Joy Velasco - Nursing major

Jamerie E. Paras - Business Management and Accounting major

Maia Pangelinan - Education major

SECRETARY

Ainah Chargualaf - Liberal Arts major

Aira Joy Velasco - Nursing major

Eloise Lopez - Education major

Hilaria Aldan - Education and Social Work major

Jaiden Pia-Mae M. Santos - Business Management major

VICE PRESIDENT

Eloise Lopez - Education major - Business Management major

Jaiden Pia-Mae M. Santos - Business Management and Accounting major

Jamerie E. Paras - Education major

Victoria Matsunaga - Education major

TREASURER

Alyssa Attao - Education major

Duncan Laxa - Business Management major

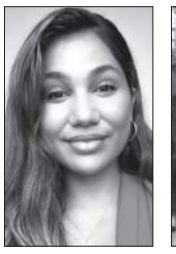
John Chloel Delos Reyes - Business Management major

Eloise Lopez - Education major

Kelly Malisga - Business Management major

SENATOR

Alyssa Attao - Education major



Victoria Bellas - Business and Liberal Arts major

Angela Bernal - Education major

Reaven Cruz - Liberal Arts

Duncan Laxa - Business Management major

Eloise Lopez - Education major

Nemerlyn Magat - Business Management and Business Administration major

Victoria Matsunaga - Education major

Joelin Mettao - Education major

Leila Nawaz - Education major

"It is great to see that more and more students are wanting to become a part of NMC's governance process," NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico said. "Students leaders play an important role in advocating for students and making sure their voices are heard in major decision making processes." All voting will be held online through Google Forms.

"I look forward to working with the students who are elected in this year's elections," said NMC Student Leadership coordinator Alexis Cabrera. "I wish all the candidates the best of luck next week."

More information about each candidate can be found on NMC's social media pages on Facebook and Instagram (@nmc.proa). For any questions, email Cabrera at alexis.cabrera@marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

Chambers joins the CNMI Bar

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Keith Chambers II was sworn into the CNMI Bar Association last Tuesday at the Guma Hustisia soon after passing the CNMI bar exam.

Chambers

Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexandro Cruz Castro swore in Chambers at the Supreme Court courtroom in the presence of Superior Court associate judge Joseph N. Camacho and Superior Court deputy clerk and judicial assistant Delia Salas Magofna.

"It's a great honor being part of the CNMI Bar. I'm very thankful for everyone who came out today and it makes me so happy to see everyone and it's very exciting. I'm very happy," he said.

Chambers said it was a great honor to be the only person who took and passed the exam this year.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

NMPASI

NORTHERN MARIANAS PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEMS, INC.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

NMPASI hereby seeks comments and/or suggestions from the community on how to improve upon its proposed Statement of Goals & Priorities for fiscal year 2021 as follows:

Statement of Goals and Priorities

[Fiscal Year 2021]

[CLIENT / COMMUNITY SERVICES]

GOAL 1: To provide legally-based advocacy services on behalf of individuals with disabilities and their families in the CNMI.

Priority 1.1: Facilitate appropriate advocacy and provide direct representation for eligible individuals with disabilities in the community (at least one more than the previous fiscal year).

Priority 1.2: Facilitate sufficient technical assistance to individuals with disabilities, family members of individuals with disabilities and other members of the general community at large.

Priority 1.3: Facilitate appropriate representation for un/underserved individuals with disabilities (including but not limited to those living in institutions or other housing facilities).

GOAL 2: To advance the understanding of and appreciation for Protection & Advocacy services and disability-related issues in the CNMI.

Priority 2.1: Facilitate opportunities for the community to engage in learning about disability-related issues.

Priority 2.2: Promote the understanding of local and federal disability laws.

Priority 2.3: Foster local capacity in self-advocacy for individuals with disabilities.

[ADMINISTRATION/OPERATIONS]

GOAL 3: To enhance the quality of protection & advocacy services and the efficiency of the organization's operations.

Priority 3.1: Maintain an efficient, effective and legally-compliant administrative operation.

Priority 3.2: Maintain an effective, diverse and knowledgeable staff and board of directors.

Priority 3.3: Ensure sufficient and sustainable funding in support of organization's mission.

For anything further, please feel free to contact the NMPASI Office at (670) 235-7273/4 [tel.] / 235-7275 [fax] / 235-7278 [tty] or contact us on-line at www.nmpasi.org.

NMPASI, a local non-profit organization, administers grant funds from the U.S. **Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS)/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD), and the Human Resources Services Administration (HRSA), the **U.S. Department of Education (DOE)**/Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and the **Social Security Administration (SSA)**.*

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 1242 Pohnpei Court
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel No: (670) 664-4809 Fax: (670) 664-4814
Email: cnmi@cnmibpl-hcplb.net
Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on **Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 8am** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Administration Building, Governor's Conference Room on Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (08/19/2020)
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairperson's Report
  - Letter from Dr. Grauman
VII. Director's Report
VIII. Investigator's Report
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
  A. Governor's Office
  B. Legislature
X. Old Business
XI. New Business
XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
  A. New Application
    - Pacific Health Inc. dba PHI PHARMACY IV
  B. Renewal Applications
XIII. Miscellaneous Business
XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
  A. [Proposed] Settlement Agreement on HCPLB Case No. 20-0001
XV. Announcements
  A. Next Meeting Date
  B. Adjournment of Meeting

FSM graduate student excels at Sophia University

TOKYO—A graduate student from Kosrae in the Federated States of Micronesia was recently recognized for having one of the top academic records in the Sophia University in Japan.

Tamae Waguk, who is attending Sophia University on an APIC-MCT International Student Scholarship, overcame significant odds when she got stuck on Kosrae because of the novel coronavirus pandemic and couldn't return to Tokyo. Waguk finished her thesis and completed her final semester despite having to write her thesis in the yard outside of her home so as to not disturb her family, with the light of her laptop screen attracting swarms of mosquitoes. She completed her final year at Sophia with a grade point average of 3.93, with 4.0 being only A grades.

"For Tamae to complete her written thesis in Kosrae was indeed challenging. As all islanders know, Internet access is not stable and often her ability to download academic papers and do work online depended on the weather, specifically because her home depends on solar power. That isn't something students have to struggle with when doing their studies in Japan," said professor Anne McDonald, a senior faculty member in the Graduate School of Environmental Studies at Sophia University.

"We are thrilled—but not surprised—by Tamae's outstanding academic performance in Tokyo," added executive director William Kostka of the Micronesia Conservation Trust, which is based in Pohnpei, FSM. MCT and the Tokyo-based private foundation The Association for Promotion of International Cooperation partner with Sophia University to award two annual full-ride graduate scholarships in Environmental Studies at Sophia.

Waguk

"Our goal in sponsoring this scholarship is to train Micronesians to lead their fight on the climate change front. Tamae is showing us how that's done, added Ambassador Peter Yoshiyasu Sato, president of APIC. APIC's mission is to strengthen Japan's relations with the nations of the Pacific and Caribbean. This is the fourth year that the APIC-MCT International Student Scholarship is being offered.

Waguk, who graduated from Sophia University this month, is scheduled to start work in September in Kosrae as a technical officer with the FSM Ridge to Reef project. She also earned an undergraduate degree from the University of Guam in Business Administration with a concentration in Finance and Economics. She also studied at the College of Micronesia-FSM.

Waguk is following in the footsteps of her late father, Erick Waguk, a well-known forestry expert on Kosrae. He died shortly before his daughter began her studies in Japan, Tamae Waguk used many of her father's books, research papers and field notes to write her thesis.

The Micronesia Conservation Trust, headquartered in Pohnpei, supports biodiversity conservation and related sustainable development in the region comprised of the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, U.S. territory of Guam and U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The MCT's Bill Raynor Micronesia Challenge Scholarship Program also supports graduate students selected for this initiative. One of the first Micronesia graduates of the Sophia program, Bertha Reyuw, now serves as MCT's Capacity Building Program Manager and oversees this scholarship program for MCT.

Sophia University is considered one of the top research universities in Japan. It was founded in 1913 by the Roman Catholic order The Society of Jesus, better know as the Jesuits. About 14,000 students attend undergraduate and graduate programs at the university, which is located in central Tokyo. ***(PR)***

Water service outage on Friday; power outage next week

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public that there will be a scheduled water service interruption for customers in the areas of As Lito, As Perdido, and Koblerville (from St. Jude Church to the ABCD Market in Kobler) and Tottotville. Water service interruption is scheduled this Friday, Sept. 18, 2020, from 8am to 4pm.

CUC water operators will be performing two waterline leak repairs on Chalan Monsignor Martinez Road near the Taiwan Building and Green Consume Market in As Lito. Water service to the affected areas will resume soon after.

For the safety of the men and women at the job site, CUC urges the public to exercise caution when traveling through the waterline repair sites on Chalan Monsignor Martinez Road or to take an alternative route if necessary.

Power outage Tuesday next week

There will be a scheduled power interruption for a portion of Garapan on Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2020, from 9am to 1pm. As CUC continues its ongoing system maintenance, there will be scheduled power interruptions to de-energize utility lines such that CUC linemen are able to safely replace a rotted and burnt three-phase primary power pole in the affected area.

Because of the scale of work that will be performed, CUC asks travelers to take an alternate route or to exercise caution when driving through the working area.

■ Tuesday, September 221 2020 — 9am to 1pm

❑ Outage type: Sectionalized outage on the Feeder 2 Circuit

❑ Project location: Near Beach Garden Hotel and Apartment in Garapan

❑ Power service area(s) affected: Llat Street, Mooty Street and a portion of Chichirica Avenue in Garapan

❑ Water well(s) affected: None

❑ Wastewater lift station(s) affected: None

For more information, contact the CUC hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates. ***(PR)***

QUAKE BRIEFS

5.0 magnitude quake in Mariana Islands

At 6:27pm on Sept. 14, 2020, a report of a 5.0 magnitude earthquake occurred south of the Mariana Islands. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories from the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information please contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 670-237-8000. ***(PR)***

4.8 magnitude quake in Merizo

At 9:24pm on Sept. 14, 2020, a report of a 4.8 magnitude earthquake occurred 274km southwest of Merizo Village, Guam. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories from the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information please contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 670-237-8000. ***(PR)***

4.5 magnitude quake occurred in Mariana region

At 2:56pm on Sept. 11, 2020, a report of a 4.5 magnitude earthquake occurred at 21.977°N 143.128°E in the Mariana Islands region. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories from the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information please contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 670-237-8000. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND Floor Arrival Bldg.
PO BOX 501055 SAIPAN MP 96950
Phone: (1-670) 237-6500/1 Fax: (1-670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com
Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

NOTICE OF INVITATION FOR BID
ADVERTISING CONCESSION AT THE TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Project No.: CPA-IFB-003-20
CPA Concession No.: TAD-2020-01–02

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (the "CPA") is accepting sealed bids, subject to the terms and conditions of the Invitation for Bid (the "IFB"), and other contract provisions, for bids from firms, companies, and/or corporations for Advertising Opportunities at the Tinian International Airport.

The IFB will be issued and available for pick-up beginning September 16, 2020, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Thursday, at the Administration Office, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport. CPA offices are closed every Friday for austerity reasons and also on holidays. The IFB includes layouts and requirements. All responses to this IFB shall also take into account any and/or all costs that will be charged to the bidder awarded the contract for the project. Prospective bidders will be required to pay an administrative fee of $100.00 for costs associated with handling and consideration of the bid.

Questions and/or clarification concerning this project shall be in writing and sent to the attention of the Executive Director through email at cpa.admin@pticom.com with copy to Joy Ann DeLeon Guerrero at joydlg@cpa.gov.mp no later than September 30, 2020.

All bids shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: **"INVITATION FOR BID SUBMISSION: CONFIDENTIAL, ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY CPA-IFB-003-20."** One (1) original and two (2) copies of the bid must be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time, October 20, 2020, to the Authority Administration Section, Office of the Executive Director, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport.

Bids will be opened on October 20, 2020, at 3:00p.m. at the Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Departure Building, Saipan International Airport. Bids are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee. The concessions are for the right to advertise at certain designated locations within the Tinian International Airport for a period of two (2) years and requires the concessionaire to operate such concession to the satisfaction of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so, would be in CPA's best interest. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said bids if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest. All bids shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-20-030

INSTALLATION OF GRANULAR ACTIVATED CARBON (GAC) FILTER FOR TEN (10) WELLS (W19-072)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Installation of Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) Filter for Ten (10) Wells in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists, in general installation of a new GAC filter, strainer, flow meter, installation of gate valve assembly, pressure gauges, air relief valve, pressure release valves, concrete pad and other related work. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **180 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **September 17, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-20-030, *Installation of Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) Filter for Ten (10) Wells"*,** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on October 06, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States, Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). **Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.**

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on September 21, 2020** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Mr. Joel Puyat, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer via email joel.puyat@cucgov.org and Ms. Christie Sablan, Procurement & Supply, Purchasing Technician, Senior via email christie.sablan@cucgov.org

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

The shameful stalemate over coronavirus relief

Senate Democrats have blocked the Republicans' long-delayed plan for additional coronavirus aid, raising the prospect that Congress will provide no added fiscal support for the economy between now and the presidential election in November. The two sides are no longer talking, and at this point, each might think that doing nothing serves its electoral interests.

Settling for this paralysis, however, would be shameful. The economy needs additional relief immediately; delaying it will only compound challenges down the road.

The blame for the current setback lies squarely with Republicans. Democratic leaders are right to call the GOP's latest plan a stunt, not a serious proposal. It's much too small and fails, in particular, to extend adequate support to state and local governments, which are under severe financial stress. Getting to a better result demands that both sides give ground—but it's the Republicans who ought to move most.

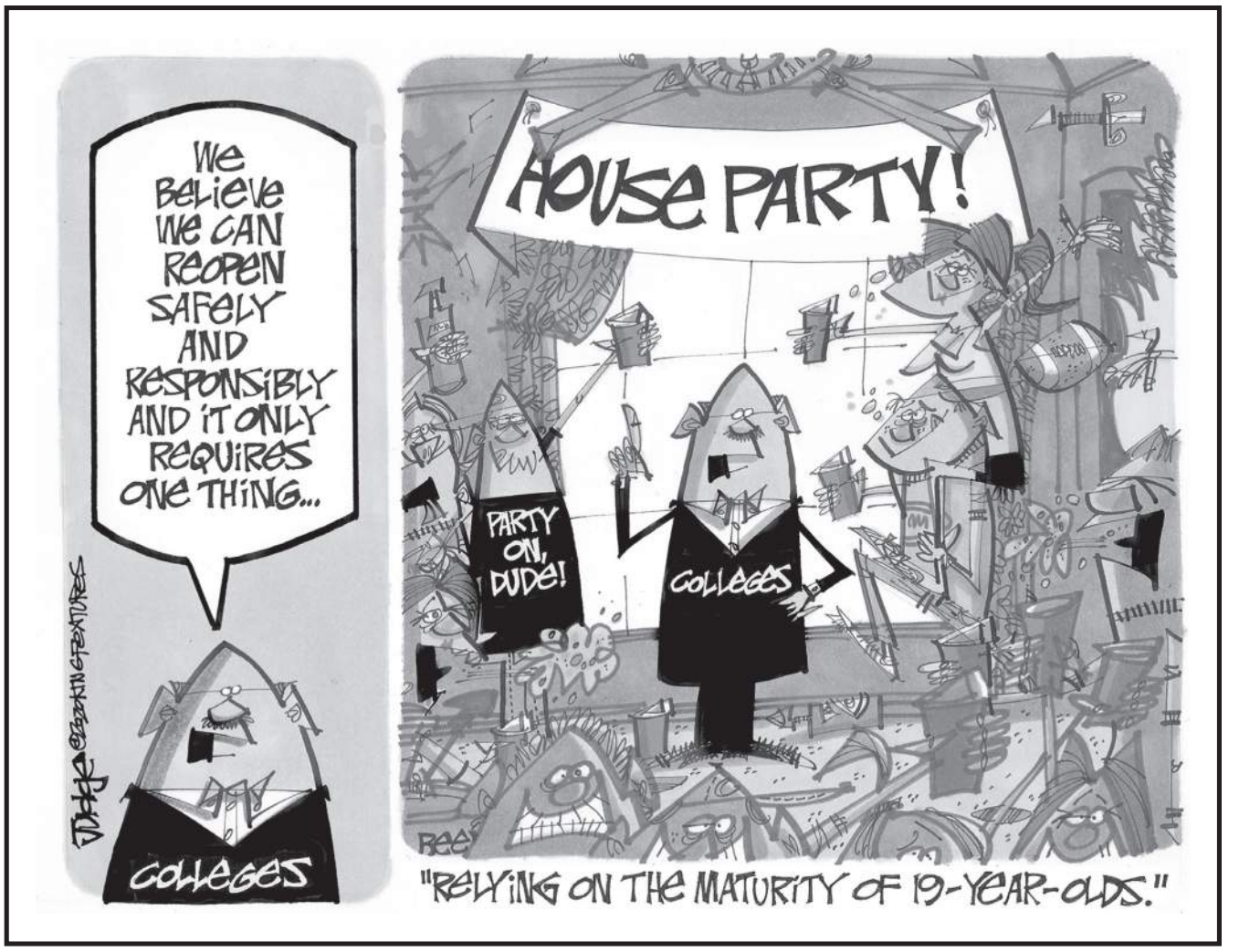
Their so-called skinny bill would extend the existing Paycheck Protection Program (for small employers that retain workers despite losing business because of the pandemic), provide new money for health care and schools, and give financial aid to the U.S. Postal Service. It also proposes a weekly unemployment-benefit supplement of $300 through the end of the year, compared with the $600 bonus in the previous relief package, which ran out at the end of July. Republicans had previously supported a new round of $1,200 stimulus checks as well, but following internal dissent dropped the idea. The overall cost of the proposed measure was between $500 billion and $700 billion—less, if you allow for unspent funds from previous plans.

Senate Democrats have been pressing a version of a measure already passed by the House, which would extend the $600 supplement, give states and cities another $1 trillion in aid, send a new round of stimulus checks, and more, at a cost of around $3.5 trillion. They've said they're willing to trim that back to $2.2 trillion.

Under the circumstances, the spending envisaged by Senate Democrats is justified. Granted, the details could be improved. The $600 bonus, for instance, isn't ideal. Even with so many people still out of work, some employers (according to the Federal Reserve's most recent "Beige Book") say they've found it difficult to fill vacant positions. With the weekly supplement in place, many of the unemployed have been better off out of work. It would be better to renew this support in the form of a supplement bringing benefits up to, say, 80% of previous earnings.

The case for another round of flat-rate stimulus checks is also questionable, given that these payments don't depend on the circumstances of the people who benefit. Payments more heavily weighted toward low-income workers would be preferable—for instance, in the form of a more generous earned income tax credit.

See CORONAVIRUS on Next Page


We believe we can reopen safely and responsibly and it only requires one thing...
COLLEGES
HOUSE PARTY!
PARTY ON, DUDE!
COLLEGES
"RELYING ON THE MATURITY OF 19-YEAR-OLDS."

Burning landscape is proof of rapid climate change

By DIANNE FEINSTEIN
Los Angeles Times

Dianne Feinstein is the senior U.S. senator from California.

So far this year, California has experienced three of the four largest fires in state history, and we're only just entering the traditional fire season. Sixteen of the 20 largest fires have occurred since 2007, nine of those in just the last five years.

Every time California suffers a particularly bad fire season, we ask the same questions: How can we prevent destructive fires in the future? Where can we turn for more resources? What can we do to help those who lost their homes and businesses?

One near-term solution is the Emergency Wildfire and Public Safety Act, a bill I introduced last month with Sen. Steve Daines, R-Mont., to carry out wildfire mitigation projects, sustain healthier forests and help businesses and residences limit their risks from future fires.

AP
A firefighter is silhouetted against a fire burning outside the village of Roqueiro, near Oleiros, Portugal, Monday, Sept. 14, 2020.

But immediate steps to combat wildfires will only get us so far. We must recognize that the root cause of this devastation is climate change—which is also the cause of searing droughts and the continuing rise of sea levels.

We can fund all the firefighters and air tankers in the world; we can pump billions of dollars into expensive water infrastructure; we can surround low-lying towns with levies and sea breaks—but we'll never get ahead of these crises until we make the investments needed to reverse the course of climate change.

California knows the devastation of a warming climate all too well, and it has been a global leader in the transition to a zero-carbon future.

In 2018, the state enacted SB 100, the groundbreaking law that requires that 100% of California's electricity will come from clean energy by 2045. Critics said this was impossible, but California is ahead of schedule to meet this goal. More than one-third of the state's electricity now comes from clean sources like solar and wind power.

The process hasn't been perfect. One continuing challenge is the rolling blackouts because of heatwaves and as a wildfire prevention measure when winds are strong. But these are the kinds of obstacles we can overcome to avoid the bigger calamities we will otherwise face.

Even with a statewide focus on addressing climate change, California can't reach its goals entirely on its own. We need the federal government to partner with California and other states on the procurement and buildout of clean energy infrastructure, to include more solar and wind farms and the construction of high-efficiency batteries to store increased capacity.

As the top Democrat on the Senate subcommittee that funds clean energy technologies, I've worked hard with Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), the chairman of the subcommittee, to move us in that direction.

Congress increased funding for renewable energy programs by more than $400 million this year, the highest funding level ever. Our national labs, like Lawrence Livermore and Lawrence Berkeley, received $7 billion for research on artificial intelligence to improve energy and battery technologies to complement wind and solar and make our cars cleaner.

Congress even funded, for the first time ever, research on how to cost-effectively remove carbon directly from the air. And

See BURNING on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Kenya handled COVID better, Finland's folks are happier, but US still is strong

By ANDRES OPPENHEIMER
Miami Herald

Andres Oppenheimer is a Latin America correspondent for the Miami Herald*, 3511 N.W. 91 Avenue, Doral, Fla. 33172; email: aoppenheimer@miamiherald.com.*

Pundits have been forecasting for several decades the end of the American century, and so far they have been proven wrong. But several new world rankings in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic are raising new fears about the country's future.

The latest rankings come amid President Trump's taped admission to journalist Bob Woodward that he lied to the American public about the seriousness of the coronavirus, which may have cost tens of thousands of the more than 192,000 COVID-19 deaths in the United States.

While the leaders of many other countries routinely wore face masks in public and urged people to maintain social distance, Trump mocked those measures and urged states to open their economies despite knowing how lethal the virus was.

Trump says now that he wanted to avoid panic—which is hard to believe, given his daily doomsday warnings about Black Lives Matter protests and potential Mexican immigrant invasions. But he was most likely eager to prevent a plummeting stock market that could hurt his re-election chances. Whatever the reasons, the hard data show that Trump's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been disastrous.

With only 4.2% of the world population, the United States accounts for 22% of the world's COVID-19 deaths, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center.

What's more, the United States ranks 32nd out of 36 countries in its response to the pandemic, according to a new index by Foreign Policy Analytics, the data research arm of Foreign Policy magazine. Senegal and Kenya are among the countries that did a much better job than the United States, the COVID-19 Global Response Index says.

But beyond the U.S. response to the pandemic, other new international rankings that measure economic and social data also are pointing at a U.S. decline.

The just-released Social Progress Index, which measures 50 indicators of well-being, places the United States in 28th place among 163 countries. As recently as 2011, the United States ranked No. 19 in this index.

The Social Progress Index, chaired by Michael Porter of the Harvard Business School, puts the United States behind poorer countries such as Greece. The ranking is led by Norway, Denmark and Finland.

Another massive study, the 2020 World Happiness Report—partly based on the Gallup World Poll—puts the United States in 18th place out of 153 countries, down from 15th place in 2015. The ranking is led by Finland, Denmark and Switzerland.

When it comes to the U.S. image abroad, it has generally declined during the past two decades, according to a Pew Research Center study. The percentage of Germans with a favorable view of the United States has fallen from 63% 10 years ago to 39% today, while in Spain the percentage has dropped from 61% to 52 percent, and in Mexico from 69% to 36 percent.

Still, as Mexico's former foreign minister Jorge Castaneda says in his new book, "America Through Foreign Eyes," what he describes as "American civilization" may be declining but has still has a long way to go.

America's political system has become dysfunctional, among other things, because—even before Trump's threats to question the Nov. 3 election results if he loses—an outdated Electoral College voting system that privileges smaller and less populated rural states does not reflect the country's political reality.

While Democrats have won the popular vote in most recent presidential elections, Republican presidents have ruled during 12 of the past 20 years. That has led to a "political paralysis" that has not allowed major reforms on issues such as gun safety, immigration and civil rights in recent decades, Castaneda says.

"The United States is still way ahead of China, and will probably continue being so for the next 40 or 50 years because of its economic, military and cultural superiority," Castaneda told me. "In the long run, China and India will probably surpass the United States, but I don't see that happening over the next four decades."

I agree. Even the Pew Research survey shows that the United States remains much more popular than China worldwide.

Trump's terrible handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, race relations and world affairs has probably accelerated America's fall in global rankings. But, especially if current polls are right and Trump is not re-elected, the United States stands a good chance of prolonging its global primacy among the big powers in the near future.

Hollywood's shameful kowtow to Beijing

By RICH LOWRY
King Features Synd., Inc.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

Hollywood is accommodating a new era of McCarthyism, imposed this time by Red China.

It involves everything that Hollywood tells us that it hates—censorship, pressure to conform and blacklists. Yet the studios have seamlessly absorbed China's dictates into their operations.

This most iconic American business is now, literally, an agent of Chinese influence.

The latest outrage is Disney's live-action remake of the animated movie from the 1990s, "Mulan," based on Chinese folklore about a girl enlisting in the army. Disney filmed parts of the movie in China, and in its credits, thanks Chinese propaganda departments as well as a public security bureau in the province of Xinjiang, where Beijing is carrying out its hideous campaign against the Uighurs.

If you think Hollywood would be sensitive about associating itself with an ongoing atrocity, you haven't paid much attention to its priorities lately, which are all about pleasing Beijing.

Hollywood hasn't dared to make movies offensive to Beijing in more than two decades. A trilogy of such movies came out in 1997, most famously "Seven Years in Tibet," starring Brad Pitt. Ever since, Hollywood has considered kowtowing to Beijing the better part of valor.

In a chilling report released a few weeks ago about Hollywood's subordinate relationship to Beijing, PEN America described the forces that have given China the whip hand.

First, there's sheer market power. China went from having a market about the size of Peru in the late 1990s to a behemoth box office. Money talks, even if it is the money of a country hostile to the United States.

Then, there's China's comprehensive system of censorship that very much applies to foreign movies. It is rare that a studio or producer says "no." To his credit, Quentin Tarantino refused to cut a comic scene featuring Bruce Lee from "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood."

Otherwise, the changes are exacting. "Mission: Impossible III" cut a scene where tattered clothes hung from a clothesline in Shanghai. Chinese villains are out of the question. Notoriously, Paramount changed the invaders in a remake of "Red Dawn" from Chinese to North Korean.

Since Beijing can delay the release date of a movie or demand that a scene be reshot, and studios don't want to deal with the uncertainty, Hollywood preemptively accedes to Beijing's wishes. PEN America notes that producer David Franzoni has said, "They have a lot of power so you want to try to be sure you have it all down the first time."

Paramount removed patches with the Japanese and Taiwanese flags from Tom Cruise's bomber jacket in the sequel to "Top Gun." As PEN America points out, the changes had already been made when the trailer was released, meaning Paramount didn't wait for Chinese censors to object.

The director of "Seven Years in Tibet," Jean-Jacques Annaud, subsequently released a letter expressing slavish regret. He "solemnly declared" that he never supported Tibet independence and never had contact with the Dalai Lama. "Moreover," he added, "becoming friends with him is out of the question."

The upshot is that Hollywood is much more comfortable criticizing the United States than one of the most reprehensible regimes on the planet. The repression of the Uighurs? As far as Hollywood is concerned, it doesn't exist and, at this rate, never will.

CORONAVIRUS

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But here are the crucial points. States and cities have seen their budgets crunched by higher outlays and lower revenue, and need more financial aid. The unemployed need generous well-targeted help. And the economy as a whole requires additional fiscal support, as the Fed continues to emphasize. Also bear in mind that the cost of additional public borrowing is currently close to zero. This shouldn't license fiscal profligacy, to be sure. But under current circumstances, a new relief measure costing between $2 trillion and $3 trillion (depending on the pace of the recovery) can't be called excessive.

The economy badly needs a compromise plan. Ideally, it would be much closer to the Democratic proposal than to the Republicans' plainly inadequate alternative. But the worst outcome would be a tactically motivated stalemate that does nothing at all. Right now, this gross failure of the political process looks all too plausible.

(c) 2020 *Bloomberg News*

BURNING

From Page 8

while President Trump tried to slash funding for the Environmental Protection Agency by $1.7 billion, Congress instead increased it by $207 million, including for anaerobic digesters to produce fuels from waste.

Of course, developing cleaner technologies isn't the only step. We also need to reduce energy demand. Here the challenges are substantial. How can we reduce energy use through new technologies without imposing new costs on working people? How can we urge China and India to take similar actions? And what actions can Congress take to help cut energy use and emissions?

One important step is to put a price on carbon. Last year, Sen. Chris Coons (D-Del.) and I introduced the Climate Action Rebate Act. This bill would place an increasing fee on greenhouse gas emissions and aims to reduce U.S. carbon emissions 55% by 2030 (from 2017 levels) and reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. It would rebate most of the revenues from the carbon fee to low- and middle-income Americans as a monthly dividend. The remainder of the revenues would be spent on infrastructure, research and worker and community transition assistance.

There's no silver bullet to creating a sustainable clean energy economy. But every tangible action taken by Congress can make a difference in diverting us from the calamitous path we are on.

We've seen some success in securing more clean energy funding under a Republican-controlled Senate. We will do even more if Democrats retake the Senate and the White House.

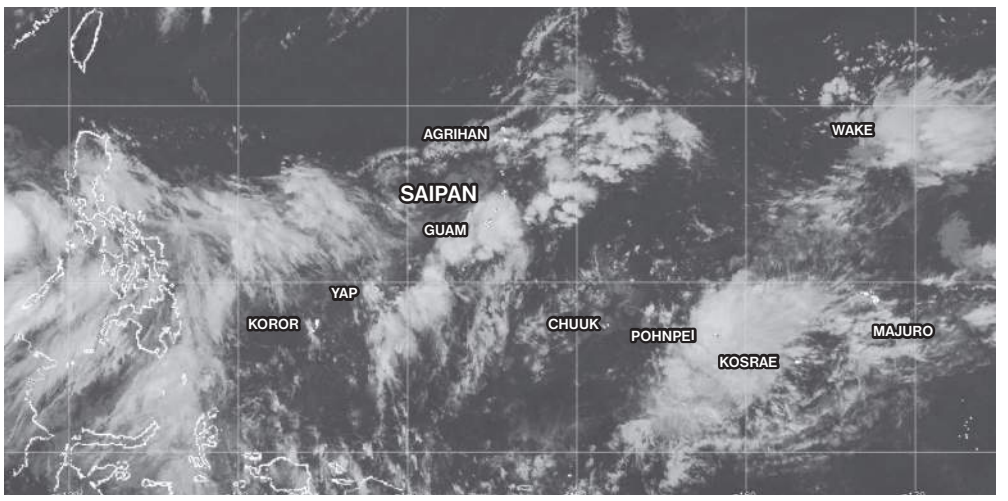
California is doing its part. We need the federal government to follow suit.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	SUNDAY
Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers in the morning, then isolated showers in the afternoon. Isolated thunderstorms. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. East winds 5 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
87° 78°	87° 78°	87° 78°	88° 78°	89° 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:10 AM, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Radar shows scattered showers about to come ashore on Guam. Showers are also near Rota, although for now Tinian and Saipan are somewhat clearer. The buoys show combined seas of 3 to 5 feet, mainly from the east with a bit of energy from the north.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 76°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 76°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 76°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:05 AM	6:17 PM
Friday	6:05 AM	6:16 PM
Saturday	6:05 AM	6:15 PM
Sunday	6:05 AM	6:14 PM
Monday	6:05 AM	6:13 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	5:35 AM	6:20 PM	-
Friday	6:36 AM	7:06 PM	-
Saturday	7:36 AM	7:52 PM	-
Sunday	8:36 AM	8:39 PM	-
Monday	9:37 AM	9:28 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Showers	57° / 52°
Beijing	Sunny	88° / 59°
Hong Kong	Showers	88° / 81°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	86° / 75°
London	Mostly Cloudy	63° / 48°
Los Angeles	Sunny	76° / 63°
Manila	Thunderstorms	88° / 79°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	55° / 43°
Miami	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
New York	Partly Cloudy	78° / 65°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	82° / 70°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	64° / 48°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	82° / 66°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	72° / 57°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	89° / 67°
San Francisco	Windy	66° / 55°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	79° / 63°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	82° / 68°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	82° / 65°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:16 AM	LOW TIDE	0.86
6:45 AM	HIGH TIDE	2.08
1:34 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.06
8:00 PM	HIGH TIDE	2.07

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
  - ❏ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
  - ❏ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
  - ❏ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - ❏ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES

GUM-MNL

UA183	7:30am	9:10pm	1 via Guam
UA183	7:30am	10:50pm	5 via Guam

Friday GUM-MNL will need THU overnight in GUM, so did not include in below.

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	7:30am	8:10am	1, 4
UA117	7:50am	8:30am	6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	7:30am	9:10pm	1 via Guam

ARRIVALS

MNL-GUM

UA184	10:45pm	4:25am+1	1 via Guam
UA184	11:45pm	5:33am+1	5 via Guam

Monday MNL-GUM will need TUE-WED overnight in GUM, so did not include in below.

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:50am	6:31am	1, 4
UA174	6:15am	6:56am	6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	11:45pm	6:56am+1	5 via Guam

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301.2	8:30AM	9:00AM	Tues/Fri
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Tues/Fri

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101.2	9:30AM	10:00AM	Tues/Fri
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Tues/Fri

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1212	18:00	18:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

Spicy Thai Restaurant is always evolving

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Spicy Thai in Garapan has been successfully navigating its business through this pandemic by growing with the times. Their staying power is attributed to the way they respond to any situation and how they evolve, finding ways to adjust and improve service to the community while serving delicious Thai dishes.

"We started doing dine-in services on July 7 after being inspected by the Bureau of Environmental Health. …Due to health and safety guidelines, we cannot continue our lunch buffet until it is safe to do so. To make up for that, the Spicy Thai team has decided to do a four-choice $10 lunch special and you can come in and choose the dishes you wish to eat. If you want more choices, it will just be $2 extra," said executive assistant Jean Bracken.

"Our portion size is quite big and most customers take home their leftovers. We tried to come up with a way to incorporate our buffet into a more healthy and safe way and to limit social interactions. We believe this is a good idea for customers to enjoy their meals without having to wait for their food being made while also having that 'lunch buffet' atmosphere," Bracken added

Spicy Thai tries to expand and switch up food items every day. "Usually we try to incorporate Thai desserts or the occasional brownie and cupcake into our lunch specials. Thai desserts are hard to come by here on Saipan and we wanted to bring a little piece of Thailand to Saipan by making them authentic." she said.

"Thai desserts range from sweet sticky rice with custard to a Thai-style halo halo drink. Saturdays and Sundays are usually when you can find these desserts. We always announce available desserts on our Facebook page: Spicy Thai-Saipan," she added

Now that their dine-in service has been running for two months, health and safety protocols are also in place. Before walking into the restaurant, customers must sanitize their hands using our automatic hand-sanitizing dispenser. They then need to write down their names, how many people are there in their party, telephone numbers, and their temperatures. Customers must wear their face masks in order to come into the restaurant. Social distancing is a must in order to fight the spread of COVID-19.

Bracken said all these safety precautions are required by the BEH. Customers are welcome to make reservations but it is not required.

Whether it is dine-in or take out during lunch time, Spicy Thai makes sure to meet customer satisfaction. "We have received great feedback from our customers. The fast-paced lifestyle makes it hard for people to dine in and wait for their food, so the bento boxes are a nice touch for a 'Grab 'N' Go' situation. One customer also said that we have the best deal on the market with our bentos being only $10," Bracken said.

The restaurant publishes its daily lunch specials, announcements and all things Thai on its Facebook page. Dinner is reserved only for ala carte items from their menu. "However, we do catering options from 11am to 8:45pm every day," Bracken added.

Spicy Thai is open from Monday to Sunday 11am to 9pm and last call order is at 8:45 pm. For more information, call (670) 235-3000 or (670) 234-2989. Look them up on Facebook: Spicy Thai-Saipan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Have a sweet tooth? Spicy Thai has special desserts that will satisfy your cravings.

One of Spicy Thai's special desserts, Thai Halo Halo. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ADB forecasts developing Asian economies in recession in '20

By ELAINE KURTENBACH
AP BUSINESS WRITER

Developing economies in Asia will contract in 2020, the first such downturn in nearly 60 years, the Asian Development Bank said Tuesday in an update to its forecasts.

The update of the ADB's outlook estimates the regional economy will contract 0.7% this year, recovering to 6.8% growth in 2021.

Conditions could deteriorate further, however, if the coronavirus pandemic worsens significantly, the regional lender said. The update downgrades growth estimates for many countries in the region, where outbreaks of coronavirus have surged in some countries, such as the Philippines and Indonesia.

The report said that China, where the pandemic began, has already begun to recover and will see its economy grow 1.8% this year and 7.7% in 2021. The 6.1% growth for China's economy in 2019 was the slowest pace in decades.

Asia's status as a production base for many medical products, digital devices and optical equipment helped to cushion the blow to trade from the pandemic downturn, the report noted.

Nonetheless, the downturn is the worst since the early 1960s, the report said.

"This has set back efforts to life hundreds of millions of people in our region out of poverty," said the ADB's chief economist, Yasuyuki Sawada.

Governments in many countries have imposed border controls, lockdowns and other restrictions to stem the spread of the coronavirus and prevent more outbreaks. But such measures come at a huge economic cost.

US tariffs on China are illegal, says world trade body

GENEVA (AP)—A World Trade Organization panel ruled Tuesday that Trump administration tariffs on $200 billion worth of Chinese goods are illegal, vindicating Beijing even if the United States has all but incapacitated the WTO's ability to hand down a final, binding verdict.

The decision marks the first time that the Geneva-based trade body has ruled against a series of high-profile tariffs that President Donald Trump's government has imposed on a number of countries—allies and rivals alike. Trump has repeatedly claimed that the WTO treats the U.S. unfairly.

The ruling, in theory, would allow China to impose retaliatory tariffs on billions' worth of U.S. goods. But it is unlikely to have much practical impact, at least in the short term, because the U.S. can appeal the decision and the WTO's appeals court is currently no longer functioning—largely because of Washington's single-handed refusal to accept new members for it.

In its decision, the WTO's dispute settlement body ruled against the U.S. government's argument that China has wrongly engaged in practices harmful to U.S. interests on issues including intellectual property theft and technology transfer—and it quickly drew criticism of U.S. trade representative Robert Lighthizer.

"This panel report confirms what the Trump administration has been saying for four years: The WTO is completely inadequate to stop China's harmful technology practices," Lighthizer said in a statement. He said the United States had presented "extensive evidence" of China's intellectual property theft and the WTO has offered no fixes for it.

"The United States must be allowed to defend itself against unfair trade practices, and the Trump administration will not let China use the WTO to take advantage of American workers, businesses, farmers and ranchers," he added.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
27,995.60	3,401.20	11,190.32
+2.27	+17.66	+133.67
.0081%	0.52%	1.21%

EXCHANGE RATES
In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.3663	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7497	Russian Ruble	73.0023
British Pound	0.7750	Indian Rupee	73.4036	Singapore Dollar	1.3595
Canadian Dollar	1.3173	Japanese Yen	105.2380	South Korean Won	1153.57
Chinese Yuan	6.6825	Malaysian Ringgit	4.0892	Swiss Franc	0.9079
Euro	0.8435	New Zealand Dollar	1.4854	Taiwan Dollar	28.7412
		Philippine Peso	47.5188	Thailand Baht	31.1380

Nation

Trump denies downplaying virus, casts doubt on mask usage

By ZEKE MILLER and KEVIN FREKING
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Fielding compelling questions about voters' real-world problems, President Donald Trump denied during a televised town hall that he had played down the threat of the coronavirus earlier this year, although there is an audio recording of him stating he did just that.

■■■

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP)—State and local officials around the U.S. are rolling back social-distancing rules again after an abortive effort over the summer, allowing bars, restaurants and gyms to open. Fans are gathering mask-free at football games. President Donald Trump is holding crowded indoor rallies.

While some Americans may see such things as a welcome step closer to normal, public health experts warn the U.S. is setting itself up for failure—again.

"Folks are becoming very cavalier about the pandemic," said Mark Rupp, professor and chief of infectious diseases at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Nebraska's governor ended nearly all of his state's restrictions on Monday, even with new cases of the coronavirus on the rise.

"I think it is setting us up for further transmission and more people getting ill and, unfortunately, more people dying," Rupp said.

The virus is blamed for more than 6.5 million confirmed infections and 195,000 deaths in the U.S., by far the highest totals of any country, according to the count kept by Johns Hopkins University.

■■■

Trump, in what could well be a preview of his performance in the presidential debates less than two weeks away, cast doubt on the widely accepted scientific conclusions of his own administration strongly urging the use of face coverings and seemed to bat away the suggestion that the nation has racial inequities.

"Well, I hope there's not a race problem," Trump said Tuesday when asked about his campaign rhetoric seeming to ignore the historical injustices carried out against Black Americans.

Face-to-face with everyday voters for the first time in months, Trump was defensive but resisted agitation as he was pressed on his administration's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and why he doesn't more aggressively promote the use of masks to reduce the spread of the disease.

"There are people that don't think masks are good," Trump said, though his own Centers for Disease Control and Prevention strongly urges their use.

The event, hosted by ABC News' George Stephanopoulos, was a warmup of sorts before Trump faces Democratic nominee Joe Biden in the first presidential debate on Sept. 29. Taped at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, it featured Trump taking questions from an audience of just 21 voters to comply with state and local coronavirus regulations.

Trump sought to counter his admission to journalist Bob Woodward that he was deliberately "playing it down" when discussing the threat of COVID-19 to Americans earlier this year. Despite audio of his comments being released, Trump said: "Yeah, well, I didn't downplay it. I actually, in many ways, I up-played it, in terms of action."

"My action was very strong," Trump added. "I'm not looking to be dishonest. I don't want people to panic."

Trump also insisted he was not wrong when he praised China's response to the virus in January and February, saying he trusted Xi Jinping, the Chinese leader. "He told me that it was under control, that everything was and it turned out to be not true," Trump said,

'Huge rainmaker': Hurricane Sally threatens historic floods

Corbin Boyce holds an American flag on the beach near Fort Walton Beach, Fla., on Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2020, as strong winds and rough waves from Hurricane Sally scour the shoreline.
AP

NAVARRE BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Heavy rain, pounding surf and flash floods hit parts of the Florida Panhandle and the Alabama coast on Tuesday as Hurricane Sally lumbered toward land at a painfully slow pace, threatening as much as 30 inches (76 centimeters) of rain and dangerous, historic flooding.

The storm's center churned offshore 65 miles (105 kilometers) south-southeast of Mobile, Alabama, as Sally crept north-northeast toward an expected Wednesday landfall at 2 mph (3 kph), according to the National Hurricane Center. The forecast map showed the center likely coming ashore in Alabama, near the Florida line.

Hurricane force winds extended 40 miles (65 kilometers). Rain fell sideways and began covering roads in Pensacola, Florida, and Mobile. More than 80,000 power customers were without electricity, according to poweroutage.us .

Up to a foot (more than 30 centimeters) of rain had fallen already on the coast by Tuesday night and Sally's lumbering pace meant there would likely be extended deluges.

"A hurricane moving at 2 mph is stalled for all intents and purposes," said Brian McNoldy, a hurricane researcher at the University of Miami. "If they aren't moving along and they just kind of sit there, you're going to get a ridiculous amount of rain."

Sally strengthened a bit late Tuesday, with sustained winds reaching 85 mph (140 kph). It remained dangerous even though its winds were down considerably from a fierce peak of 100 mph (161 kph) on Monday. The National Hurricane Center expected Sally to remain a Category 1 hurricane when it comes ashore, adding "historic life-threatening flash flooding is likely."

By Tuesday evening, hurricane warnings stretched from coastal Mississippi to the Florida Panhandle. There also was a threat the storm could spawn tornadoes and dump isolated rain accumulations of 30 inches (76 centimeters) in spots from the Florida Panhandle to southeast Mississippi.

Heavy rain and surf pounded the barrier island of Navarre Beach, Florida, on Tuesday and road signs wobbled in the wind. Rebecca Studstill, who lives inland, was wary of getting stuck on the island, saying police close bridges once the wind and water get too high. "Just hunkering down would probably be the best thing for folks out here," she said.

Two large casino boats broke loose Tuesday from a dock where they were undergoing construction work in Bayou La Batre, Alabama. M.J. Bosarge, who lives near the shipyard, said at least one of the riverboats had done considerable damage to the dock.

"You really want to get them secured because with wind and rain like this, the water is constantly rising," Bosarge said.

In Orange Beach, Alabama, towering waves crashed onshore as Crystal Smith and her young daughter, Taylor, watched before nightfall. They drove more than an hour to take in the sight.

"It's beautiful, I love it," Crystal Smith said amid whipping wind. "But they are high. Hardly any of the beach isn't covered."

ACROSS THE NATION

City to pay $12M to Breonna Taylor's family

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP)—Months after the police killing of Breonna Taylor thrust her name to the forefront of a national reckoning on race, the city of Louisville agreed to pay the Black woman's family $12 million and reform police practices as part of a settlement announced Tuesday. But Taylor's mother and others who have taken up her cause said much more must be done to right the wrongs of racial injustice in America. "Please continue to say her name," Taylor's mother, Tamika Palmer, declared at an emotional news conference, evoking the call that has become a national refrain for those outraged by the shooting and police violence. Taylor's death sparked months of protests in Louisville and calls nationwide for the officers to be criminally charged. The state's attorney general, Daniel Cameron, is investigating police actions in the March 13 fatal shooting.

Major Portuguese wildfire close to end, officials say

LISBON, Portugal (AP)—Portuguese authorities said Tuesday they are close to bringing under control a major wildfire, with just a handful of hot spots being targeted by water-dropping aircraft. Just over 1,000 fighters, more than 330 vehicles and eight aircraft were attending the blaze in thick woodland in central Portugal, some 200 kilometres (124 miles) north of Lisbon. Civil Protection Agency commander Luis Belo Costa said conditions were "very favorable."

He told a news conference that around 90% of the fire's perimeter, stretching some 60 kilometers (37 miles), is under control. Five firefighters suffered burns in the fire's initial stages Sunday as their vehicle was caught in the flames. Large wildfires break out each year in Portugal, with poor forest management blamed for repeated outbreaks. Two major blazes killed 106 people in 2017.

Democrats to investigate forced surgery claims in Georgia

ATLANTA (AP)—Leading congressional Democrats reacted furiously Tuesday to lightly substantiated claims that immigrants held at a detention center in Georgia are undergoing questionable hysterectomies. In a complaint filed Monday, a nurse alleges that the Irwin County Detention Center performed questionable hysterectomies, refused to test detainees for COVID-19 and shredded medical records. A top medical official with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement released a statement "vehemently" disputing the claims, saying only two women have been referred for hysterectomies from the facility since 2018. The statement came after Democrats seized on nurse's allegations that a gynecologist she called the "uterus collector" was performing "mass hysterectomies"—declaring they would investigate the matter.

Asia

India: 5M cases, 82,066 deaths

NEW DELHI (AP)—India's coronavirus confirmed cases crossed 5 million on Wednesday, still soaring and testing the country's feeble health care system in tens of thousands of impoverished towns and villages.

The Health Ministry reported 90,123 new cases in the past 24 hours, raising the nation's confirmed total to 5,020,359, about 0.35% of its nearly 1.4 billion population. It said 1,290 more people died in the past 24 hours, for a total of 82,066.

India's total coronavirus caseload is closing in on the United States' highest tally of more than 6.6 million cases and expected to surpass it within weeks.

India reported a record daily high of 97,570 cases on Sept. 11 and has added more than 1 million cases this month alone.

Experts warned that India's case fatality rate could increase in coming weeks with lockdown restrictions relaxed except in high-risk areas.

But authorities ruled out imposing a second country-wide lockdown as recoveries were growing at more than 78%. Its fatality rate is 1.6%, far lower than 3% each in the United States and Brazil, according to the Johns Hopkins Medicine and University.

Dr. Gagandeep Kang, an infectious diseases expert from Christian Medical College in the southern Indian state of Vellore, said that the number of cases increasing in India was inevitable. But the country still had the opportunity to try and restrict cases through a strategy of testing and isolating the affected places.

Japan's Abe clears way for his successor

By MARI YAMAGUCHI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Japan's outgoing Prime Minister Shinzo Abe takes off his face mask as he arrives at the prime minister's office for a cabniet meeting Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2020, in Tokyo. AP

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Cabinet resigned, clearing the way for his successor to take over after parliamentary confirmation later Wednesday.

Abe, Japan's longest-serving prime minister, announced last month that he was stepping down because of health problems.

"I devoted my body and soul for the economic recovery and diplomacy to protect Japan's national interest every single day since we returned to power," Abe told reporters at the prime minister's office before heading into his final Cabinet meeting. "During this time, I was able to tackle various challenges together with the people, and I'm proud of myself."

He said his health is improving thanks to treatment and that he, as a lawmaker, will support his successor-to-be, Yoshihide Suga, from now on. He also thanked the people for their understanding and strong support for the upcoming leadership under Suga.

Suga, chief Cabinet secretary for Abe's government and long seen as his right-hand man, was chosen Monday as the new head of the governing Liberal Democratic Party, virtually guaranteeing his election as prime minister in a parliamentary vote Wednesday because of the party's majority.

Suga, a self-made politician and the son of a strawberry grower in the northern prefecture of Akita, has stressed his background in promising to serve the interests of ordinary people and rural communities.

He has said he will pursue Abe's unfinished policies, and that his top priorities will be fighting the coronavirus and turning around an economy battered by the pandemic. He gained the support of party heavyweights and their followers early in the campaign on expectations he would continue Abe's line.

US envoy: China is insincere toward SE Asia

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A U.S. official accused China on Tuesday of bullying and insincerity in its dealings with Southeast Asian nations, but said Washington isn't forcing the region to choose sides between the two world powers.

Stilwell

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State David Stilwell emphasized American resolve in maintaining its presence in the region and preventing "unwelcomed and certainly unhelpful military adventurism," including in the disputed South China Sea.

The comments in an online news conference were the latest display of the Trump administration's tough rhetoric toward China. Last week, U.S. and Chinese officials squared off in annual meetings of foreign ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Stilwell pointed to Chinese actions toward countries with rival territorial claims in the South China Sea, suppression of pro-democracy groups in Hong Kong and operation of dams that threaten the water supply for downstream nations along the Mekong river.

Washington is also concerned about "persistent reports of Chinese weapons ending up in the hands of various armed groups in Myanmar," he said, without elaborating. Myanmar, which is fighting several insurgent minority groups, has close ties with Beijing.

He said Chinese insincerity is best illustrated in its aggressive behavior in the South China Sea, where it has turned disputed reefs into weaponized artificial island outposts despite a commitment not to militarize the region.

The U.S. regards China's vast maritime claims in the strategic waterway as "unlawful," Stilwell said, but stressed that the long-simmering disputes should be resolved peacefully and through dialogue.

World

A 'NEW' MIDEAST?

Israel, 2 Arab states ink pacts

WASHINGTON (AP)—Israel on Tuesday signed historic diplomatic pacts with two Gulf Arab states at a White House ceremony that President Donald Trump declared will mark the "dawn of a new Middle East," casting himself as an international peacemaker at the height of his reelection campaign.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, President Donald Trump, Bahrain Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa and United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahyan react on the Blue Room Balcony after signing the Abraham Accords during a ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House, Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2020, in Washington. AP

The bilateral agreements formalize the normalization of Israel's already thawing relations with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain in line with their common opposition to Iran. But the agreements do not address the decades-long conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, who view the pacts as a stab in the back from their fellow Arabs and a betrayal of their cause for a Palestinian state.

Hundreds of people massed on the sun-washed South Lawn to witness the signing of agreements in a festive atmosphere little marked by the coronavirus pandemic. Attendees did not practice social distancing and most guests didn't wear masks.

"We're here this afternoon to change the course of history," Trump said from a balcony overlooking the South Lawn. "After decades of division and conflict, we mark the dawn of a new Middle East."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the day "is a pivot of history. It heralds a new dawn of peace."

Neither Netanyahu nor Trump mentioned the Palestinians in their remarks, but both the UAE and Bahraini foreign ministers spoke of the importance of creating a Palestinian state.

Emirati Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the brother of Abu Dhabi's powerful crown prince, even thanked Netanyahu for "halting the annexation" of West Bank land claimed by the Palestinians in exchange for Emirati recognition. Netanyahu, however, has insisted that Israel has only suspended its plans to annex West Bank settlements.

"Today, we are already witnessing a change in the heart of the Middle East—a change that will send hope around the world," al-Nahyan said.

Bahrani Foreign Minister Abdullatif al-Zayani said Bahrain would stand with the Palestinians. "Today is a truly historic occasion," he said. "A moment for hope and opportunity."

But in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian militants fired two rockets into Israe l, apparently meant to coincide with the ceremony. The Israeli military said the rockets were fired from Gaza and one was intercepted by air defenses. Earlier in the day, Palestinian activists held small demonstrations in the West Bank and in Gaza, where they trampled and set fire to pictures of Trump, Netanyahu and the leaders of the UAE and Bahrain.

Israel and the U.S. hope the agreements can usher in a major shift in the region should other Arab nations, particularly Saudi Arabia, follow suit. That could have implications for Iran, Syria and Lebanon. Until now, Israel has had peace deals only with Egypt and Jordan.

Other Arab countries believed to be close to recognizing Israel include Oman, Sudan and Morocco.

"We are very down the road with about five different countries," Trump told reporters before the ceremony.

Many longtime Mideast analysts and former officials, among others, have expressed doubts about the impact of the signings.

In addition to the bilateral agreements signed by Israel, the UAE and Bahrain, all three signed a document dubbed the "Abraham Accords" after the patriarch of the world's three major monotheistic religions.

The "Abraham Accords" and the bilateral agreement signed by Israel and Bahrain fell short of more detailed formal treaties that are the diplomatic norm. Both documents were made up of general statements pledging to advance diplomacy, mutual cooperation and regional peace.

The most detailed of the agreements was the one between Israel and the United Arab Emirates. The nations agreed to approve bilateral agreements on 15 areas of mutual interest, including finance, trade, aviation, energy, telecommunications, health, agriculture and water.

During the signing ceremony, the leaders were seated at a long table where President Harry S. Truman once held weekly luncheon meetings with his Cabinet. Discussions about the Truman Doctrine to restrain Soviet expansion during the Cold War and the Marshall Plan to send billions in economic aid to Western Europe after World War II were held at the table.

The stagecraft, including live music and flags was meant to evoke previous Middle East agreements. Trump's political backers are looking to boost his standing as a statesman with just seven weeks to go before Election Day. Until now, foreign policy has not had a major role in a campaign dominated by the coronavirus, racial issues and the economy.

Besides Republicans, a few House Democrats attended the event, a notable development at a time when their leader, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is barely on speaking terms with the president. Many Democrats, including presidential nominee Joe Biden, support the deal.

Environment

'We don't want an island full of trash'

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A perfect weekend would be going to the beach to swim and have a picnic. Now imagine arriving at the beach and then seeing over 14,000 cigarette butts, almost 4,000 beverage cans, 1,500 plastic bottles, and over a thousand food wrappers scattered all over the place.

That would probably spoil the fun, right?

Yet these are exactly the kind and amount of trash the over 1,600 volunteers collected in the CNMI during the International Coastal Cleanup in September last year.

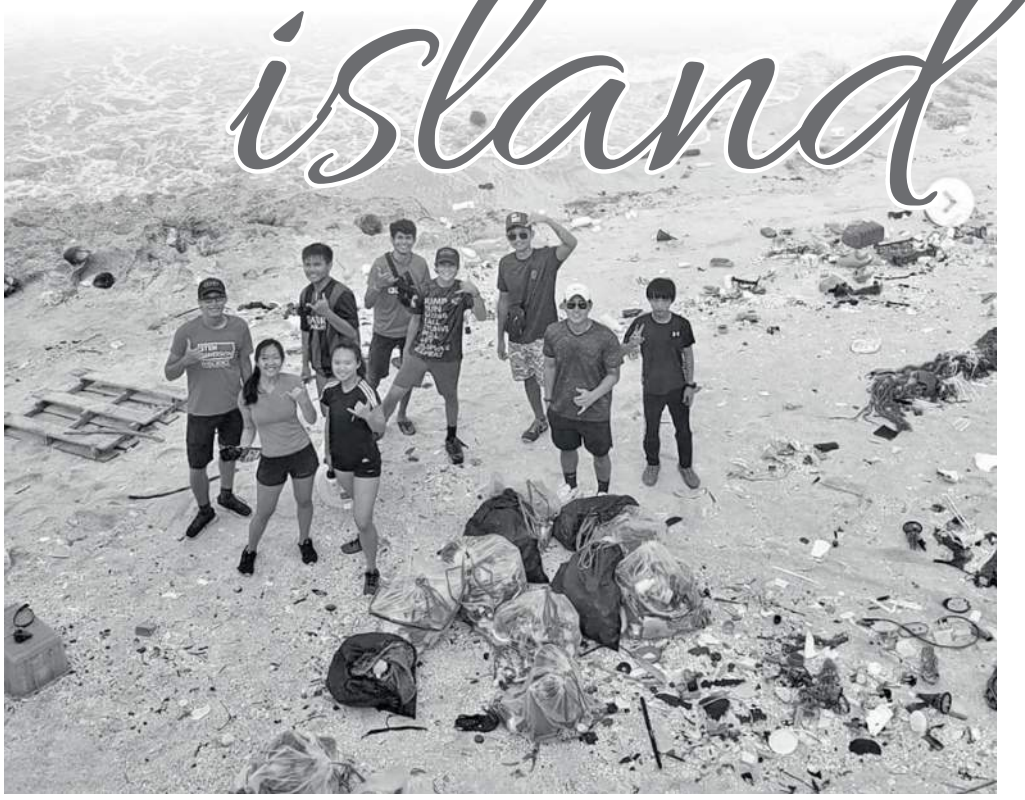
This Saturday, Sept. 19, the CNMI community will again join the rest of the world in this international cleanup event, and we are all counting on each other to take part in keeping this beautiful island clean. According to Division of Coastal Resources Management's Colleen Flores, who oversees the island's ICC, about 750 volunteers have signed up so far.

Of all trash collected, cigarette butts, at 14,618, ranks first on the type of trash collected on the island. This mirrors the international scene, as it also ranks first, at 5.7 million cigarette butts collected worldwide last year. Next to cigarette butts, in the CNMI, are microplastics—plastic pieces less than 2.5 cm.

"As a coastal community, we experience first-hand the effects and impacts of marine debris. Marine debris, specifically plastic, never fully biodegrades. Instead, it breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces until it becomes microplastic," Flores said.

Microplastics have adverse effects on humans as they move through the marine food chain. Local livelihood, the economy, and culture depend so much on the environment that everyone must come together to fight ocean pollution in the CNMI, she added.

"The International Coastal Cleanup is a perfect opportunity for our community members to take action. … Individuals looking to join the ICC can meet the [Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality] team on Saturday at 8am, as we clean the shores of Tank Beach, Kagman," she said.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Youth volunteer group Saipan Cleanup is on a mission to clean the beaches of Saipan one hike at a time. Formed in March, they were appalled at the amount of trash they saw on the beach, decided to take action, and are now a big inspiration to many in the community.

Youth take charge

At last year's ICC, the CNMI had 1,617 volunteers cleaning up 76 locations, and collected 9,427 lbs of trash.

Saipan had 884 volunteers who cleaned up 47 locations and collected 5,820 lbs; Rota had 646 volunteers who cleaned up 18 sites and collected 2,542 lbs; and Rota had 87 volunteers who cleaned up 11 sites, and collected 1,065 lbs of trash.

Save the date! Volunteer for the International Coastal Cleanup this Saturday

Yet many in the community have been environmentally-proactive, cleaning up the islands even beyond the September ICC date. Among them is a group of young hikers taking charge, cleaning beaches one hike at a time, and they call themselves "Saipan Cleanup." They are Grace Choi, Louisa Han, Tahj Salas, Dylan Mister, Abbas Shakir, Tonyboy Tenorio, and Logan Mister. Their group was formed last year in March, on a hike out to the little pocket beaches in Dandan, after being appalled by the amount of trash on each beach, and knowing that it was heavily affecting marine life, especially after finding a dead shark on the beach on that same hike. To inspire people to pick trash up, the group set up their own page on Instagram.

Mister said that picking up the trash "allows the trash to end up somewhere that isn't a fish or marine creatures' stomach," among many other benefits. He added that there are about 30 volunteers who help out when they can, and that their numbers are steadily growing.

"We thought cleanups were a good simple way we could make an impact. …We continue doing it because 'why not?' but personally, as a kid, the ocean had always brought so much to me, I figured it was time to give back to it," he said.

As for the kinds of waste they collect, Mister said that the main trash they collect are marine debris but that there are always trash from people who go to the beach. He said batteries are very common in Dandan, which they assume are from night fishers.

"Other places around the island are heavily littered with [beer cans]. It's such a shame that people aren't responsible to pick up after themselves," he said.

For Saipan Cleanup, the greatest solution to the trash problem is to reduce plastic use. "Reusing your plastic is also a great way to conserve. …Little things like not taking a plastic bag at the grocery store makes the biggest difference if everyone were to do it," Mister added.

The young environmentalists also envision a recycling center that would pay citizens to recycle, a small incentive that could change the overall outlook regarding trash on island, and that could encourage people to responsibly manage trash.

"We all need to work together to dig ourselves out of the hole we have dug," he said. "…Be responsible and respect our islands for their natural beauty. Don't leave any trash anywhere, and if you ever go somewhere try to pick up one or two pieces of trash. If we all work together Saipan could be trash free."

Young people make up a fraction of the island's population, but they make up the entirety of the CNMI's future. They will be tomorrow's teachers, physicians, environmentalists, officials, farmers, fishermen, everything… and it is to the CNMI's good that they are already taking charge right now.

These words from a young environmentalist could never have been more true. So, it's a date, let us all volunteer this Saturday for the International Coastal Cleanup and help cleanup. After all, no human would ever want to live on an island full of trash.

IVA MAURIN

Over a thousand volunteers came together to pick up trash at different locations in the CNMI to join the global community in the International Coastal Cleanup celebration last year.

2019 ICC TOP 10 WASTES

International Coastal Cleanup volunteers not only collect trash but also collect data on the different types of marine debris that mask the coastal areas of the CNMI. Last year, DCRM identified the following wastes as the Top 10, as collected by the volunteers.

1. Cigarette butts
2. Microplastics (plastic pieces less than 2.5 cm)
3. Beverage cans
4. Plastic bottle caps
5. Plastic lids
6. Tiny glass pieces (less than 2.5 cm)
7. Plastic bottles
8. Food wrappers
9. Metal bottle caps
10. Tiny foam pieces (less than 2.5 cm)

With at least five of the types being plastic, Division of Coastal Resources Management's Colleen Flores advises everyone to take action and reduce the consumption of single-use plastic. "Pick-up after yourself and others, volunteer for community cleanups, educate and inform your friends and family on the importance of a trash-free sea. Although our efforts may seem small, our collective endeavors will make a massive difference."

For more information on the International Coastal Cleanup, or to learn more about ongoing projects and programs at DCRM, visit www.dcrm.gov.mp or contact outreach@dcrm.gov.mp. ***(Iva Maurin)***

Life & Style

Madonna to direct and co-write biopic about herself

Madonna

NEW YORK (AP)—A biopic about Madonna has found a uniquely qualified director: Madonna, herself.

Universal Pictures announced Tuesday that the studio is developing an untitled film about the pop star that Madonna will direct and co-write with "Juno" scribe Diablo Cody. Madonna said she wants the film to convey "the incredible journey that life has taken me on as an artist, a musician, a dancer – a human being, trying to make her way in this world."

"The focus of this film will always be music," said Madonna in a statement. "Music has kept me going and art has kept me alive. There are so many untold and inspiring stories and who better to tell it than me. It's essential to share the roller coaster ride of my life with my voice and vision."

The film will be produced by Amy Pascal, the former Sony Pictures chief who produced "A League of their Own," the 1992 film co-starring Madonna.

"This movie is an absolute labor of love for me," said Pascal. "I have known Madonna since we made 'A League of Their Own' together, and I can't imagine anything more thrilling than collaborating with her and Diablo on bringing her true-life story to the big screen with Donna (Langley) and our partners at Universal."

Madonna, 62, previously directed the 2008 British drama "Filth and Wisdom" and the 2011 period drama "W.E.," with Abbie Corning and Andrea Riseborough. Madonna, whose last album was 2019's "Madame X," has sold 335 million records worldwide in her career.

John Boyega quits perfume ambassador role over Chinese ad

LONDON (AP)—Black actor John Boyega has stepped down from his role as a global ambassador for perfume brand Jo Malone after the company decided to hire a Chinese actor to replace him in an ad he created.

The "Star Wars" star wrote Tuesday on Twitter that the brand's decision to "replace my campaign in China by using my concepts and substituting a local brand ambassador for me, without either my consent or prior notice, was wrong."

Boyega

Jo Malone, an upscale British perfume brand owned by Estée Lauder, has said that replacing Boyega with Chinese star Liu Haoran in the ad campaign was a misstep. It has removed the ad and apologized.

The original ad starring Boyega, 28, aired last year and was called "The London Gent." It features the London-born actor walking around the neighborhood where he grew up and riding a horse in a park, and it makes a reference to his Nigerian heritage in a scene featuring West African attire.

"The film celebrated my personal story—showcasing my hometown, including my friends and featuring my family," Boyega wrote. "While many brands understandably use a variety of global and local ambassadors, dismissively trading out one's culture this way is not something I can condone."

It's not the first time Boyega has been deleted from a China-based ad. He played a leading role as Finn in 2015's "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," but he and other non-white characters were removed or diminished from a Chinese poster for the blockbuster movie.

Boyega recently told GQ that Black characters have been "pushed to the side" in Disney's "Star Wars" franchise. In June, the star made an emotional speech on racism when he joined Black Lives Matter protests in London.

Lawyer: Bolton will cooperate with any probe into his book

WASHINGTON (AP)—Former Trump administration national security adviser John Bolton will cooperate with any investigation related to the recent publication of his tell-all book, which the Justice Department has said contains classified information, his lawyer said Tuesday.

The statement from Bolton's attorney, Charles Cooper, followed reports in The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal that a federal grand jury had subpoenaed communications records from Simon & Schuster, which published Bolton's book, "The Room Where it Happened," in June.

The Associated Press could not immediately confirm those reports, and the Justice Department declined to comment.

"We are aware of reports that grand jury subpoenas have been issued seeking information concerning the publication of Ambassador Bolton's recent book," Cooper said in a statement. "Ambassador Bolton emphatically rejects any claim that he acted improperly, let alone criminally, in connection with the publication of his book, and he will cooperate fully, as he has throughout, with any official inquiry into his conduct."

Zimbabwean writer, Americans on diverse Booker Prize list

LONDON (AP)—A Zimbabwean writer who was arrested during anti-government protests is among six finalists announced Tuesday on a diverse list of contenders for the prestigious Booker Prize for fiction.

Tsitsi Dangarembga was nominated for the 50,000-pound ($64,000) award for "This Mournable Body," which links the breakdown of its central character and turmoil in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

Dangarembga, one of Zimbabwe's most garlanded authors, was arrested in July and spent a night in detention for standing by a road in the capital of Harare and holding up a placard that said "We Want Better. Reform Our Institutions."

The Booker list this year is dominated by books from American or U.S.-based authors, including "The Shadow King" by Ethiopia-born Maaza Mengiste, Diane Cook's dystopian tale "The New Wilderness," Avni Doshi's India-set "Burnt Sugar" and Brandon Taylor's campus novel "Real Life."

Only one British writer made the cut for the U.K.'s leading book prize: Douglas Stuart for "Shuggie Bain," the story of a boy in 1980s Glasgow. Stuart, too, is U.S.-based—he has lived in New York for years.

The winner will be revealed Nov. 17, though the traditional black-tie dinner ceremony at London's medieval Guildhall has been scrapped because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Founded in 1969, the prize is open to English-language authors from around the world, but until 2014 only British, Irish and Commonwealth writers were eligible.

That year's change sparked fears among some Britons that it would become a U.S-dominated prize. That hasn't happened, yet. There have been two American winners, Paul Beatty's "The Sellout" in 2016 and George Saunders' "Lincoln in the Bardo" in 2017.

The prize's literary director, Gaby Wood, said she was not concerned by the lack of British novelists on the shortlist. She said readers "don't look at passports."

Six women writers receive $30,000 Rona Jaffe Awards

NEW YORK (AP)—Fiction writers Mari Christmas and Yalitza Ferreras and poets Elisa Gonzalez and Charleen McClure are among six winners of Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers' Awards, $30,000 prizes for emerging women authors. Other winners announced Tuesday were nonfiction writer Hannah Bae and fiction writer Temim Fruchter. All six will be featured Thursday in a virtual reading hosted by New York University. The awards are named for the late novelist Rona Jaffe, who started the program in 1995. Previous winners include Eula Biss, Lan Samantha Chang and former U.S. poet laureate Tracy K. Smith.

Deleted texts to new friend arouse wife's suspicions

DEAR ABBY: My husband is currently at a job that, at first, he complained was a "drag." It later became a place he seemed to be OK working at.

A new male employee was hired—a man who is on his second marriage—and he became friendly with my husband. Over the last few months I have noticed my husband texting him quite often during his days off, including very late at night.

One day I confronted him after I checked his phone to see what they were texting and saw he had deleted some messages, even those he had shared with me as they were texting. He admitted that he had asked him about his first marriage and divorce since we were having some issues and said that's why he deleted the messages.

When my husband starts drinking at home, he starts texting him, occasionally throughout the night until he goes to bed (it could be until 5 a.m.). He deletes all those messages so I can't see them. What do you think is going on? Even on days he is off, he goes by his job to take care of something or help out.

SUSPICIOUS IN TEXAS

DEAR SUSPICIOUS: What I think is going on is less important by far than what YOU think is going on. It appears your husband has found a kindred spirit in this new employee -- or something more. Dumping on his co-worker about problems in your marriage won't lead to satisfactory conclusions. The two of you need to resolve your issues—including the fact that you no longer trust him—by talking them through with a licensed marriage and family counselor. Please don't wait until the situation deteriorates further to consult one.

DEAR ABBY: I was involved in a nearly fatal car accident some years ago. My problem is people are always telling me I should be over it by now, and there shouldn't be any more complaints or pain at this late date.

Well, that one day changed my life drastically. I'm still healing emotionally, not to mention there are lifelong injuries I will never be able to overcome. My back is in constant pain, and I can no longer lift anything. I also get daily horrific migraines. Because of that, I lost the best job I ever had, which has affected me more than anything.

People can be insensitive, patronizing and just plain rude if I mention any current issues regarding my condition. Most times I respond aggressively; at others, I try my best not to be offended by their lack of empathy. While I certainly don't want or need pity, the fact that my near-death experience is shrugged off as just an "incident" bothers me greatly. What more can I do? Or should I just stay silent and count my blessings?

SURVIVOR IN MISSOURI

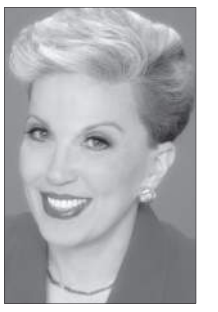
DEAR SURVIVOR: There is nothing more you can do, other than politely refuse if you are asked to do something that's now beyond your capacity. As you have discovered, responding aggressively is counterproductive.

Because these individuals have conveyed that they no longer want to hear about your accident, you may have to confide in a willing friend or a licensed therapist when you need to get things off your chest. The latter might be more satisfying than trying to talk to people who can no longer tolerate hearing about something they have no solution for.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

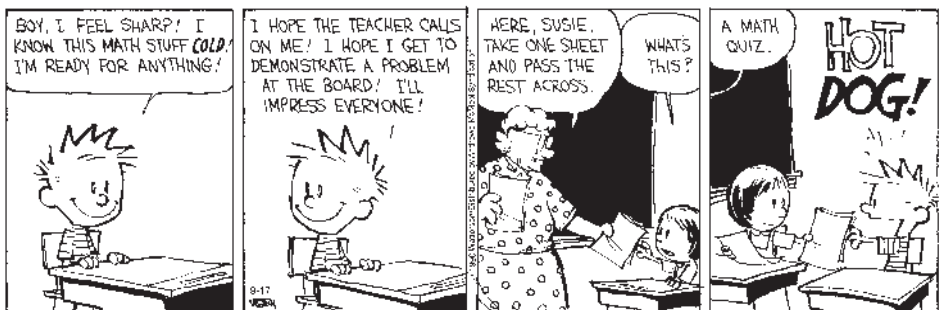


Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

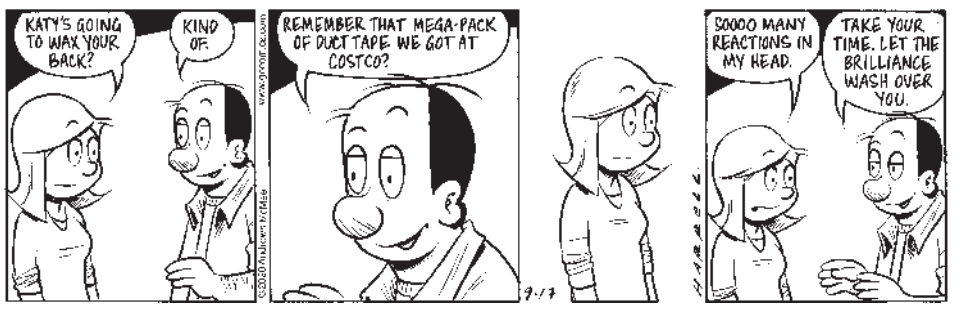

BOY, I FEEL SHARP! I KNOW THIS MATH STUFF COLD! I'M READY FOR ANYTHING!
I HOPE THE TEACHER CALLS ON ME! I HOPE I GET TO DEMONSTRATE A PROBLEM AT THE BOARD! I'LL IMPRESS EVERYONE!
HERE, SUSIE. TAKE ONE SHEET AND PASS THE REST ACROSS.
WHAT'S THIS?
A MATH QUIZ.
HOT DOG!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

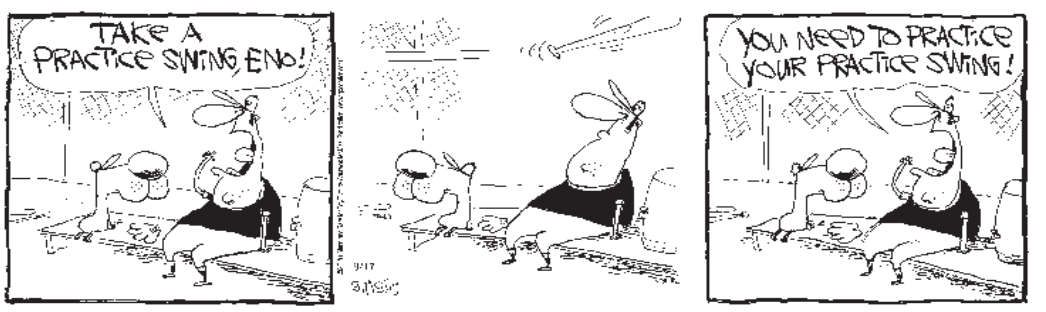
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


KATY'S GOING TO WAX YOUR BACK?
KIND OF.
REMEMBER THAT MEGA-PACK OF DUCT TAPE WE GOT AT COSTCO?
SOOOO MANY REACTIONS IN MY HEAD.
TAKE YOUR TIME. LET THE BRILLIANCE WASH OVER YOU.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Cartoon frame
4 Recipe amts.
8 Herbal drinks
12 Foreman foe
13 Sentry's cry
14 Rim
15 One who might lend you an ear
17 Refer to
18 Goal
19 Title for Camilla
21 Bequeathed
24 Avril follower
25 Judge Lance
26 Tofu source
28 Fiend
32 Antelope's playmate
34 Mahal preceder
36 Auction
37 Plant firmly
39 Luau bowlful
41 Old Oldsmobile
42 Salt source
44 Prolific inventor
46 Online media presentation
50 — -la-la
51 Beige
52 Tel Aviv residents
56 Loafer, for one
57 "Phooey!"
58 Here, to Henri
59 AAA jobs
60 Historic times
61 Deli creation

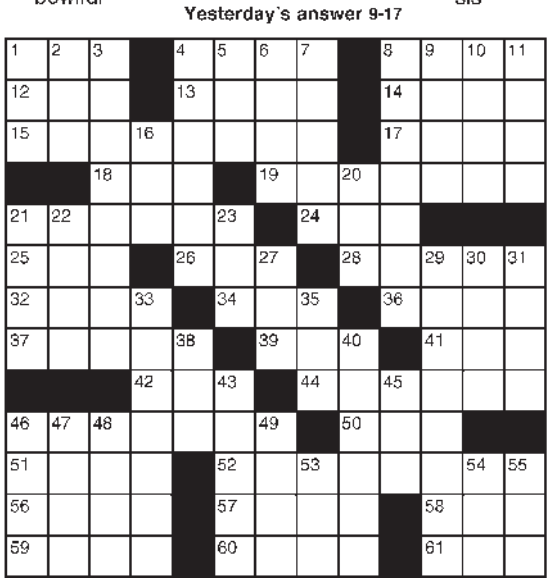
DOWN

1 "East of Eden" brother
2 Inventor Whitney
3 "Stay" singer/songwriter
4 Topics
5 — Juan
6 Begged
7 Play the banjo
8 Computer whizzes
9 "Nurse Jackie" actress Falco
10 Literary reps
11 Beholds
16 Up to
20 Scoundrel
21 Broad
22 Detail
23 Speck
27 Chatter
29 Pulitzer-winning trumpeter Wynton
30 Margarine
31 Very bright
33 Saves
35 Average guy
38 Narc's org.
40 Luggage attachments
43 Stage comment
45 Rage
46 Left on a map
47 Reverberate
48 Forehead
49 Despot
53 Genetic letters
54 Hosp. area
55 Bro or sis

Solution time: 24 mins.

B	I	D		S	E	N	D		C	A	R	S
A	D	E		E	M	I	R		F	L	E	E
B	O	B		R	U	L	E	O	F	L	A	W
E	L		S	A			W	A	D			
			S	P	A	R		T	A	R	E	S
S	O	U	T	H	P	A	W		Y	O	_	K
E	R	R		S	O	N	A	R		T	S	E
F	I	A	N		P	O	W	E	R	S	A	W
D	Y	I	A	N			N	A	N	A		
			B	E	E				E	M	B	E	R
R	U	B	B	E	D	R	A	W		R	U	E
O	G	R	E		I	O	T	A		O	R	E
C	H	A	D		T	E	L	L		W	O	K

Yesterday's answer 9-17



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Patrick Mahomes, 25; Danielle Brooks, 31; Doug E. Fresh, 54; Kyle Chandler, 55.

Happy Birthday: Care and share will sum up the way your year unfolds. How you present what you want to do will determine how well you do. Be bold, adjust to change and be passionate about your beliefs and plans as you move forward. Opportunity is within reach, but it will take effort by you to get things done properly. Focus on the future. Your numbers are 12, 19, 24, 27, 31, 33, 44.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Evaluate your relationships with others, and consider who is heading down a similar path. It's time to revamp the way you do things and to monitor your time carefully. Change is required, but it will require patience to get what you want. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* A change may be necessary if you haven't been getting along with someone you work alongside. Either find a way to put your differences aside or remove yourself from the situation. Living in an unsettled situation will hold you back. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Do something that stimulates you mentally. Stay focused on what's important. If you overreact, take on too much or get involved in something that isn't going to benefit you personally, you will have regrets. Romance is in the stars. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Let your emotions and intuition lead the way. Anger is a waste of time. Put your heart into something you want to pursue, and it will help take your mind off disruptive situations. Use your imagination, and good things will transpire. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Set rules to live by that will keep you heading down the right path. Don't let what someone else decides to do influence you to take a risk. Put your energy into personal improvements, love and building a healthy home base. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Expand your awareness. Stabilize your relationships. Take an interest in what others do and say, and you will enlist the help of those who can help you excel. Keep things in perspective, and pursue what's doable. Moderation and practicality are key. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Stay focused on what's important. Refuse to let anyone interfere with your plans or your personal life. Protect your self-worth from those who put demands on you. Channel your energy into what matters most to you. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Reconnect with people you have enjoyed working alongside, and make a proposition that will help you all improve your quality of life. A change is way overdue, and making the first move will be energizing. It's time for a new adventure. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Put the past behind you, and start thinking about what you want. Positive changes at home will help you free up cash and encourage you to use your skills diversely. Avoid letting others interfere with your life, plans and future. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Do what has to be done, and don't look back ever. Laboring over something you cannot change will be detrimental to achieving the success and happiness you desire. Be true to yourself, and live life your way. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Look over your documents and investments to see where you stand. A joint venture with someone you love will bring you closer. An opportunity to excel is within reach. Love and romance are on the rise. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Look for opportunities, and positive change will take place. Touch base with people who share your opinions, beliefs and values. A shift in the way you earn your living and handle your money looks promising. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intense, resourceful and persistent. You are engaging and persuasive.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

9		5		4			
	6				5	2	
3							6
	2	8			6		
		9				8	
			3			7	4
8							1
		4	9			5	
				7		6	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 9/17

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

5	9	4	7	1	3	2	6	8
3	1	8	6	2	9	5	7	4
7	2	6	4	8	5	3	9	1
8	4	3	5	6	1	9	2	7
9	6	7	2	3	4	1	8	5
1	5	2	8	9	7	4	3	6
2	8	5	3	4	6	7	1	9
4	3	1	9	7	8	6	5	2
6	7	9	1	5	2	8	4	3

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

JAPANESE SALTS **Solution: 7 letters**

S	S	S	T	N	E	M	I	D	N	O	C	E	F	S
R	N	E	K	A	L	F	G	N	I	T	S	A	O	R
D	E	O	S	H	A	R	P	S	A	L	T	R	R	A
T	E	T	I	U	M	D	R	Y	R	E	N	T	T	N
A	B	T	A	T	A	E	U	W	G	O	G	H	U	G
S	A	S	F	W	I	S	L	O	I	N	A	Y	N	E
T	T	D	E	A	A	D	N	T	I	M	I	I	E	C
E	H	L	M	M	R	E	A	T	O	H	R	T	P	L
V	E	O	O	O	D	C	S	R	S	O	S	O	C	E
R	N	H	H	N	I	E	A	E	T	Ⓔ	W	O	R	A
E	I	S	E	F	V	S	N	S	S	D	Ⓝ	U	M	N
S	S	E	I	R	E	O	T	E	E	R	P	Ⓘ	E	S
E	I	R	A	P	C	D	S	R	O	V	A	L	Ⓕ	I
R	U	H	Y	C	N	E	T	S	I	S	N	O	C	N
P	C	T	E	E	W	S	H	I	N	K	A	I	C	G

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Acting, Aroma, Bathe, Cleansing, Coarse, Condiments, Cones, Consistency, Crafted, Cuisine, Dry, Earthy, Enden, Fine, Flake, Flavors, Fortune, Grain, Harvesting, Home, Ma-suya, Melt, Moist, Moshio, Powder, Preserve, Pure, Purification, Range, Roasting, Salt, Seawater, Sharp, Shinkai, Storing, Sweet, Taste, Thresholds, Traditions, Types, Uses

Yesterday's Answer: Bobby Pins

The NEW **Treasury 41** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Heat rise in Game 1; Nuggets oust Clippers

Miami Heat's Jimmy Butler, bottom left, and Jae Crowder (99) look on as Bam Adebayo (13) blocks a shot attempt by Boston Celtics' Jayson Tatum (0) in the closing seconds of overtime of an NBA conference finals playoff game, Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2020, in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

FLORIDA (AP)—Jayson Tatum thought he had a dunk to tie the game.

Bam Adebayo had other ideas—and in the biggest moment of his young NBA career, Miami's All-Star big man more than rose to the occasion.

Jimmy Butler's three-point play with 12 seconds left put Miami ahead for good, Adebayo finished it off with a stunning rejection of Tatum at the rim on the ensuing Boston possession, and the Heat struck first in the Eastern Conference finals with a 117-114 win in Game 1 on Tuesday night.

"When you have great competition like this, you just have to make plays that you can't even really explain," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "And that was Bam tonight."

The Heat were down by 13 in the opening minutes, down by 14 in the final quarter and felt like a bad call took the lead from them in the final seconds. They found a way in overtime, improving to an NBA-best 9-1 so far in these playoffs.

Goran Dragic scored 29 points, Jae Crowder scored 22, Butler had 20 and Adebayo had 18. But even after a night when Butler made a go-ahead 3-pointer late in regulation and had the go-ahead-for-good points again in overtime, he pointed at Adebayo for his favorite moment.

"Bam. That seals the game for us," Butler said. "I love how he does any and everything that you ask him to do. I really do. You ask him to pass the ball, he does that. Score, he does that. Come up with a huge defensive stop, block, he does that. He's a huge part to our winning. I've been saying it all year long and I'll repeat it again."

Kemba Walker's basket with 23.2 seconds left in overtime put Boston up by one, before Butler muscled his way to the rim for a score while getting fouled by Tatum. The Celtics went to Tatum on the ensuing possession, only to watch him get denied by Adebayo.

"He made a great play," Tatum said. "That's all it is. ... Can't do anything about it."

Tatum scored 30 points for the Celtics, Marcus Smart had 26 points, Walker had 19 and Jaylen Brown added 17. The Celtics had been 156-1 since the shot-clock era started 65 years ago—winners of 92 straight—when leading by 12 or more points going into the fourth quarter of a playoff game.

They're 156-2 now.

"Got to make better decisions," Walker said.

Celtics coach Brad Stevens tipped his cap to Adebayo afterward.

"He is a tremendous defender," Stevens said. "We're going to have to figure out, again, better ways to attack, especially late. I thought we really moved it at times, then we did get stagnant."

Miami's Tyler Herro was one assist shy of a triple-double—finishing with 12 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists. He would have been the second-youngest player in the last 40 years to have a postseason triple-double, one day older than Magic Johnson was when he got his first.

Major comeback, again

Nikola Jokic picked out two birthday presents for his coach. He just didn't know which one he would be wrapping.

"Before the game I told him, 'Coach, I'm going to give you a really good present—I'm going to get you home or I'm going to get you to the conference finals," the Nuggets center said.

Michael Malone was thrilled with the present he received.

Denver's dynamic duo of Jamal Murray and Jokic led another stunning turnaround as the Nuggets advanced to the Western Conference finals for the first time since 2009.

Murray scored 40 points, Jokic had a triple-double by the third quarter and Denver again overcame a double-digit deficit to shock the Los Angeles Clippers 104-89 in Game 7 on Tuesday night.

Denver became the first team in NBA history to rally from a 3-1 series deficit twice in the same postseason. The team beat Utah in Game 7 in the first round.

"Those guys stepped up on the biggest moment," said Malone, who turned 49 on Tuesday. "You find out a lot about people in these moments. Man, did we pass the character test or what?"

Even more history: The Nuggets are the third team in the U.S. major pro sports to rally from a pair of 3-1 deficits in the same playoffs, joining the 1985 Kansas City Royals and 2003 Minnesota Wild.

Denver will face LeBron James and the Los Angeles Lakers in the conference finals. They'll be the underdogs, of course. That's fine with Murray.

"It's fun to silence everybody," said Murray, who scored 25 in the first half.

They certainly quieted the noise around the Clippers, who hoped the additions of Kawhi Leonard and Paul George would lead them to their first-ever conference finals—and beyond. But LA's stars fell flat.

"It hurts. It hurts. But we move on," George said. "Year 1 together, first run together, of course we wanted to win this. But we've been very optimistic about us being together and building something going down the road."

Leonard finished with 14 points on 6-of-22 shooting, while George had 10 points on 4-of-16 shooting. The Clippers fell to 0-8 all-time in games where they could clinch a trip to the conference finals.

This marked the third time that coach Doc Rivers was on the losing end of a series where his team led 3-1. It also happened when he was with Orlando against Detroit in 2003, and with the Clippers against Houston in 2015.

Morant, Zion headline All-Rookie First Team

FLORIDA (AP)—Memphis Grizzlies phenom Ja Morant, the 2020 NBA Rookie of the Year, was a unanimous selection to the NBA's All-Rookie First Team, as the league announced both of its All-Rookie teams Tuesday night ahead of the start of the Eastern Conference finals.

Morant, who finished with averages of 17.8 points per game and 7.3 assists per game in leading the Grizzlies to the brink of the playoffs after being the No. 2 pick in the 2019 NBA Draft out of Murray State, was the only unanimous selection for the two All-Rookie teams. The teams are comprised of 10 players voted on by a global panel of 100 sports writers and broadcasters, and are selected regardless of position.

Joining Morant on the first team are his teammate, forward Brandon Clarke, Miami Heat guard Kendrick Nunn, New Orleans Pelicans forward Zion Williamson and Golden State Warriors forward Eric Paschall.

The All-Rookie Second Team includes Heat guard Tyler Herro; Toronto Raptors guard Terence Davis; Chicago Bulls guard Coby White; Charlotte Hornets forward P.J. Washington; and Washington Wizards forward Rui Hachimura.

Because of the changes to the league's calendar because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there is not a season-ending awards show this year. Instead, the league has reverted back to its old format of handing out awards periodically throughout the playoffs.

Only two honors are left to be handed out: the All-NBA teams and the league's Most Valuable Player Award.

Raptors sign Nurse to extension

Nick Nurse would have been in the final year of his contract next season. The Toronto Raptors weren't about to let that happen with their coach.

Nurse and the Raptors announced a multiyear extension Tuesday, without divulging the terms. In his two seasons with Toronto, Nurse won the 2019 NBA championship and led the Raptors to more wins than any team in the league over that span.

Nurse was originally signed to a three-year deal in June 2018 to lead the club.

"Our confidence in Nick just continues to grow, and part of that comes from what we've experienced together," Raptors President Masai Ujiri said. "The past two seasons have been unlike any other in our team's history—first, winning our championship, and then navigating a global pandemic and committing long term to the fight against racism and for social justice.

"Nick has proved that he can coach on the court and lead in life."

The Raptors went to the Eastern Conference semifinals this season, thriving in the NBA's restart bubble even after having to come to Florida two weeks early because of the challenges of bringing players back to Canada amid a quarantine. Their run ended Friday night with a Game 7 loss to the Boston Celtics.

Nurse—a Toronto assistant coach for five seasons before getting the top job—was the runaway winner of the NBA's coach of the year award this season, getting 90 of the 100 first-place votes.

"Toronto has been my home for the past seven years, and I look forward to it being home for many more," Nurse said. "I've watched this franchise grow and reach the pinnacle, and I look forward to the challenge of helping us win another championship."

The Raptors went 53-19 this season, the .736 winning percentage setting a franchise record. Nurse is 111-43 in regular-season games and 23-12 in playoff games, is a three-time Coach of the Month winner and was one of the coaches in this season's All-Star Game.

Yankees back on track, blow out Blue Jays

NEW YORK (AP)—The Yankees have transformed back into Bronx Bombers after a three-week stretch in which they nearly bombed out of postseason contention.

DJ LeMahieu and Luke Voit and became the first players at the top of New York's batting order to have five RBIs the same game, and New York rocketed past the Toronto Blue Jays into second place in the AL East with a 20-6 blowout Tuesday night that extended its winning streak to six.

Voit homered twice from the No. 2 slot, raising his major league-leading total to 18. Voit and Aaron Hicks went deep to key a seven-run second-inning burst made possible when right fielder Derek Fisher misplayed a pair of flyballs. New York hit six home runs in all.

"A couple of weeks ago, I don't think teams were scared of us. And now we're back to being the Bronx Bombers," Voit said. "I don't think people want to play us in the playoffs."

LeMahieu had four hits and five RBIs, raising his average 13 points to .363. He homered on a 48.7 mph offering from infielder Santiago Espinal leading off eighth, the slowest pitch hit for a home run since MLB started tracking velocity of pitches in 2008.

Gary Sánchez hit a three-run homer off Anthony Kay, and Clint Frazier had a two-run shot against Ryan Borucki.

New York has rebounded following a 5-15 stretch that nearly dropped it out of the eight playoff places in the AL and has closed within two games of Minnesota (30-20) for the No. 4 seed — and a first-round series at home.

AP

New York Yankees' Luke Voit hits a three-run home run during the second inning of a baseball game against the Toronto Blue Jays on Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2020, in New York.

Playoffs in bubble; World Series in Texas

The MLB and the players association have agreed to neutral-site bubbles for the final three rounds of the upcoming expanded playoffs.

After three-game Wild Card Series matchups whittle the 16-team field to eight, the three ensuing rounds will take place in bubbles. The American League will play in Southern California —either San Diego's Petco Park or Los Angeles' Dodger Stadium, while the National League will be based in Texas—at Houston's Minute Maid Park or the Rangers' Globe Life Field.

The postseason will begin on Sept. 29, and the World Series is set to begin on Oct. 20. The World Series will take place entirely at Globe Life Field, which opened this year. Notably, there are no off days between games in the first three rounds of the postseason—a strategy-altering break with convention, as off days are usually included to accommodate travel.

Phillies 4, Mets 1

Jake Arrieta pitched effectively into the sixth inning before leaving with an injury, Didi Gregorius hit a two-run homer and the Philadelphia Phillies beat the New York Mets.

The scuffling Mets played their first game since billionaire hedge fund manager Steve Cohen agreed to buy the team from the Wilpon and Katz families.

Dodgers 3, Padres 1

Tony Gonsolin quieted San Diego's bats for seven innings, Edwin Rios homered and the Dodgers snapped the Padres' eight-game winning streak.

Kenley Jansen made it interesting in the ninth, loading the bases with one out before striking out Wil Myers and rookie Jake Cronenworth to record his 11th save in 13 chances.

Red Sox 2, Marlins 0

Tanner Houck gave up just two singles over five innings to win his major league debut, pitching Boston past Miami.

Houck struck out seven and walked three on 86 pitches. Matt Barnes earned his seventh save.

Reds 4, Pirates 1

Tucker Barnhart hit a home run and Brian Goodwin prevented one with a leaping catch as Cincinnati extended its winning streak to a season-high four games with a win over Pittsburgh.

Yarbrough (1-3) followed opener John Curtiss in the second inning and gave up one run and five hits over 5 2/3 innings for his first win since Aug 11, 2019, at Seattle.

Tigers 6, Royals 0

Miguel Cabrera hit a homer and a double to help Detroit beat Kansas City.

Matthew Boyd (2-6) bounced back from a rough outing with a strong performance, throwing five-plus scoreless innings and giving up just two hits.

Braves 5, Orioles 1

Adam Duvall tied a Braves record with his 10th homer in September, and Atlanta used six pitchers to beat Baltimore.

Freddie Freeman had three hits, including a pair of RBI doubles, to help the Braves bounce back from a 14-1 drubbing by Baltimore a night earlier.

Brewers 18, Cardinals 3

Christian Yelich broke out of his slump with a home run and three hits, Ryan Braun also went deep and Milwaukee routed St. Louis.

Keston Hiura and Daniel Vogelbach also homered for the Brewers.

Astros 4, Rangers 1

George Springer and Martín Maldonado homered, Alex Bregman hit a go-ahead two-run single in the seventh inning and Houston got a needed win over Texas.

Houston starter José Urquidy (1-1) allowed three hits and one run in seven innings for his first win in his third start of the season.

White Sox 6, Twins 2

Dane Dunning pitched seven effective innings, Luis Robert had a key two-run single and the White Sox strengthened their hold on the AL Central by topping Minnesota.

Dunning (2-0) permitted one earned run and three hits.

Cubs 6, Indians 5

Willson Contreras and Cameron Maybin were plunked by consecutive pitches from Cleveland reliever Nick Wittgren in the ninth inning, forcing home the winning run for the Cubs.

Javier Báez also homered for the Cubs, who increased their lead to five games in the NL Central.

Rockies 3, Athletics 1

Antonio Senzatela pitched the first complete game of his career and Elias Díaz hit a two-run homer to lead Colorado over Oakland.

Senzatela allowed six hits and retired the last eight. He struck out three and walked one. He threw 74 of his 109 pitches for strikes in a rare pitching gem at Coors Field.

Diamondbacks 9, Angels 8

David Peralta hit a tiebreaking homer in the eighth inning, and Arizona blew a seven-run lead before rallying to beat the Angels.

Kole Calhoun had two homers, three hits and a career-high five RBIs in his return to Angel Stadium with the Diamondbacks.

Tiger faces chase for majors and tough test at Winged Foot

MAMARONECK, N.Y. (AP)—The older he gets, the more difficult it gets for Tiger Woods.

He is one victory away from setting the PGA Tour career record, and it's been that way since January.

Every major he plays this year is a chance to tie the mark for the most titles in each one. He missed out on a fifth PGA Championship victory last month. He goes for No. 4 in the U.S. Open this week at Winged Foot. He gets a shot at a sixth green jacket at the Masters in November.

"I think it gets harder to win as we all age," Woods responded to a query about records getting harder to achieve the closer a player gets to them. "I think that when you're in your prime, in your peak years, you have to take advantage of those opportunities so then when you get to the all-time marks, you have that opportunity."

It doesn't figure to get any easier at Winged Foot.

Two days before the start of the 120th U.S. Open—and sixth at Winged Foot—the course already is living up to its reputation as being a brute even without the USGA grooming it for the toughest test in golf.

Jon Rahm doesn't expect anyone under par by the end of the week.

Defending champion Gary Woodland arrived over the weekend and was chipping around the green when his caddie tossed golf balls in his direction.

"We lost a ball for about five minutes and it was right in front of me," Woodland said. "We didn't find it until we stepped on it. The golf ball can disappear pretty quickly."

He at least was heartened to hear that volunteer marshals were being brought in for the practice rounds. There is no gallery to direct, only tee shots to locate.

"The practice rounds would have been 10 hours out here trying to find golf balls," Woodland said.

None of this is news for Woods, one of 15 players who played in the 2006 U.S. Open at Winged Foot, the first major that he missed the cut as a pro. It was a month after his father died, and Woods said Tuesday in retrospect that he spent more time grieving than preparing and it showed that week.

He returned a few weeks ago for a practice round with Justin Thomas and while the course was soft, Woods thought it was ready that day for the U.S. Open. His opinion didn't change when he arrived over the weekend.

"I think it's right up there next to Oakmont and I think Carnoustie as far as just sheer difficulty without even doing anything to it," Woods said.

He is 18-over par in the six rounds he has played at Winged Foot (including the 1997 PGA Championship), 6 over in his one appearance at Oakmont (runner-up) and 3 over in his 12 rounds at Carnoustie for the British Open.

"Those three golf courses, they can host major championships without ever doing anything to them," he said. "This one or Oakmont is either one or two."

Favre: Brady is 'the last person' Arians should call out

AP
Tampa Bay Buccaneers head coach Bruce Arians, left, criticized quarterback Tom Brady after their NFL game against the New Orleans Saints, Sunday, Sept. 13, 2020, in New Orleans.

TAMBA BAY—Bruce Arians was hard on Tom Brady after his rough debut with the Buccaneers on Sunday, but Hall of Famer Brett Favre doesn't understand why.

In Favre's eyes, Arians is "barking up the wrong tree."

"I think the last person you want to call out after the first game of the year is Tom Brady," Favre said on SiriusXM NFL Radio on Tuesday, via NBC Sports. "Now maybe they had a mutual truce going into the game, going into the season, 'Hey, I'm going to be hard on you. I want the guys to know we're going to treat you the same even though technically I'm not, so are you OK with it?' If they have that truce, great.

"If not, I think you are barking up the wrong tree. Dissension could easily enter quickly."

Brady went 23 of 36 for 239 yards and a pair of touchdowns through the air, and ran one in himself in their 34-23 loss to the New Orleans Saints. He had two interceptions in the loss, however, one of which was run back for a touchdown.

Arians didn't hold back when criticizing his new quarterback on Monday, either, saying he had "looked like Tom Brady in practice," but not during that game.

"He's had it before. I mean, he knows how to bounce back," Arians said. "He knew he didn't play very well. It's not what he expects from himself nor do we expect.

"I would expect him to have a little more grit, a little more determination this week."

Favre—who played in the league from 1991-2010, most notably with the Green Bay Packers, before he was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2016—isn't putting the blame on Brady.

Given the fact that Brady is playing with a completely new team for the first time since he entered the league in 2000 and there was no preseason due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Favre thinks that the six-time Super Bowl champion just needs some time to adjust in Tampa.

"Tom's performance was not what we've come to expect from him but I'll say this, it wasn't far off," Favre said on SiriusXM NFL Radio, via NBC Sports. "And you're right, the first drive I think most people said, 'Well, he hasn't missed a beat. That's typical Tom.' I was a little bit surprised at how he started. I was not surprised with how the rest of the game unfolded. New team. He's been in a familiar environment forever.

"And then all of a sudden not only is he with a new team, football itself is totally different right now. No preseason. Yeah, we saw, we heard where he was getting some kind of workout in, whether it be virtual or in the parking lot. But, look, it's not even close to the equivalent of real bullets. And they protected OK. Tom, you know, if you protect him he's gonna pick you apart, I don't care if it is new receivers or not. And it just wasn't typical protection. I'm not blaming the line, I'm not blaming Tom Brady."

Mahomes, Chiefs top first poll

Patrick Mahomes and the Kansas City Chiefs have been riding high since winning the Super Bowl in February.

And after their opening 34-20 win over the Houston Texans, the defending champs are off to a good start in their bid to repeat.

"What makes this offense so good," Mahomes said on Monday, "is that we can change within games. We can go through our game plan and find ways to score and find ways to move the ball down the field, and (against Houston) it was running the football and taking the short passes."

The Chiefs are also No. 1 in the first AP Pro32 poll of the season. Kansas City earned 10 of 12 first-place votes for 382 points in balloting Tuesday by media members who regularly cover the NFL.

The Baltimore Ravens are No. 2 in the poll. They received the remaining two first-place votes for 371 points.

The Ravens, who finished with the best record in the NFL last season at 14-2, cruised to a 38-6 win in their opener against Cleveland and travel to Houston to face the Texans on Sunday.

"It's just hard work and dedication," Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson said on Monday. "Our guys just dialed in. They helped me out a lot, made my job a lot easier.

Mayfield to OBJ still not clicking

Same team, same offense, same huddle. Different pages.

Baker Mayfield and Odell Beckham Jr. still aren't connecting the way the Cleveland Browns planned, and it's becoming a concern.

Sure, it was only one game, but Cleveland's quarterback and star receiver struggled to find any chemistry in Sunday's 38-6 loss to the Baltimore Ravens.

"Kind of just toss it up as a mulligan," Beckham said, using the golf term for a do-over. "You have 15 other games, 15 other opportunities. Just keep moving."

Trouble is, Mayfield and Beckham aren't always moving in the same direction.

In Browns coach Kevin Stefanski's debut at Baltimore, Beckham was targeted 10 times by Mayfield, but finished with just three receptions for 22 yards -- the second-lowest output in 76 career NFL games for the three-time Pro Bowler.

Beckham also had a face-masking penalty, he nullified a catch by stepping out of bounds and had a game-swinging drop on a third-down play in the second quarter when the Browns were driving and still in the game.

And, of course, because he's OBJ, TV cameras were trained on him to capture some moments of outward frustration.

AUSTRIA

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games due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the conference competition will start next semester. Trine University is an NCAA Division III school and plays in the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

Austria is bracing for more challenges in the upcoming games and will be using this semester to get use to the high-level of competition in the collegiate ranks and work on improving his skills and developing chemistry with his new teammates

"They play at a faster pace and they are more physical. I really need to get stronger and faster so I can play better in every match. These friendly matches will help us prepare for the conference," Austria said.

The Commonwealth player is with Trine University's junior varsity squad and received an athletic scholarship from the Thunder. Before heading to Indiana, he donned the CNMI colors in the 2018 and 2019 Marianas Cup and the Asian Football Confederation U19 Championship 2020 Qualifiers in Cambodia last year. In the club level, Austria played for TanHoldings Football Club.

Meanwhile, Trine's men team also won its first game of the season after blanking Grace Christian University, 5-0, last Tuesday at the Velting Field in Wyoming Michigan.

Five different players delivered goals for the Thunder with Kaliel Alisaid drawing first blood and Trevor Towghi also scoring in the first half. Tyler Murphy, Colin Nicoski, and Alhasan Yahya made it to the board in the second half to complete Trine's domination of Grace Christian.

RIDE

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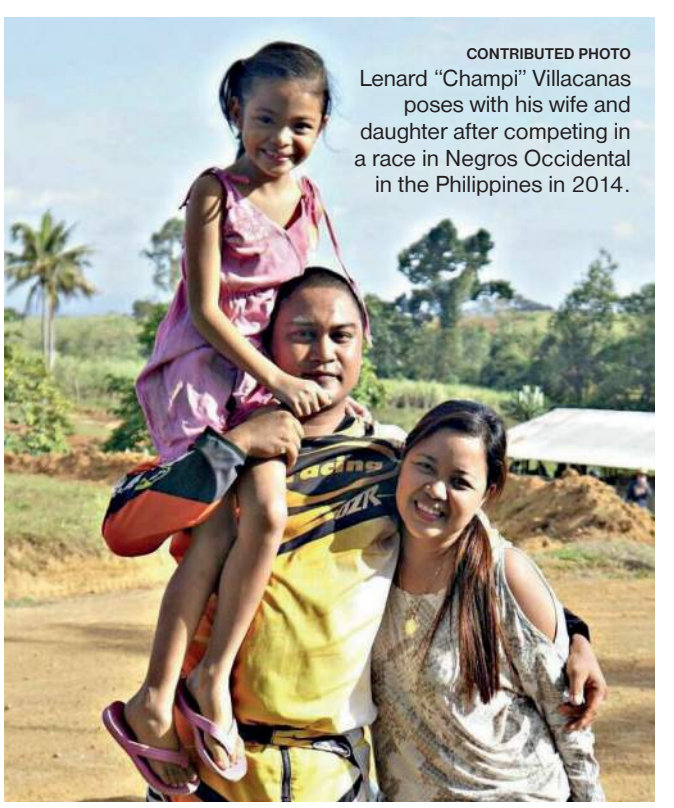
hold competitions and provide top-level tournaments for spectators. He also loves how every weekend's event is turned into a family gathering.

"Motocross is a much better choice than other outdoor sports. It also brings extra ordinary happiness because it's some kind of a bonding activity for families," Villacanas, who brings his two children and wife to watch the races.

Other MRA riders also bring their family members in Marpi to watch the afternoon races, while some children get to try the make-shift/small course that the group devised to entice beginners to the sport.

Meanwhile, MRA races start at 3pm for the kids division, while the veteran class (over 45 age group) riders take the course at 3:30pm. Next up ay 4pm is the beginners novice division, while riders in the intermediate experts close the weekend event with their race at 4:30pm.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
In this 2014 file photo, Lenard "Champi" Villacanas leads a race held in his hometown.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Lenard "Champi" Villacanas poses with his wife and daughter after competing in a race in Negros Occidental in the Philippines in 2014.

Heat rise in Game 1; Nuggets oust Clippers

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Ride day, family day

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

As the weekend nears, Marianas Racing Association member Lenard "Champi" Villacanas can't help but feel excited in anticipation of the races at Kan Pacific.

Villacanas joined the growing number of motocross enthusiasts doing regular rides at MRA's temporary raceway in Marpi, rekindling his love for the sport.

"As Sunday gets closer, the excitement over riding my bike builds up," the Chalan Kanoa resident said. "Just the sound of the bike when you start it gives you the kind of feeling you can't explain.

Villacanas is happy that he is able to get involved again in the sport that he used to do when we was still in the Philippines. The 39-year-old, who moved to Saipan in 2015, began racing in his hometown (Negros Occidental in the Western Visayas region) when he was 17 years old and suited up for Southern Negros Motorsports Safety Association, a group that organizes motocross racing around the Philippines.

"When I came here in 2015, motocross is gone. Then I heard from a friend that Cuki [Alvarez] and other former riders are trying to bring motocross back on island and I got excited. I tried to purchase a bike so I can join the race," said Villacanas, who is using a Yamaha yz250f 2018 for now while he waits for the arrival of his Kawasaki 250 2021.

He also uses the race number 8, the same one he had when he was still competing in the Philippines.

"You can say it's my lucky number. I was born on May 8 and also got married on the same date," Villacanas said.

As he joins MRA's practice races every Sunday, Villacanas sees a lot of great riders on island and appreciates how the group's officials are working so hard to get a permanent raceway so they can

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Lenard "Champi" Villacanas in action during one of Marianas Racing Association's weekend races this month in Marpi.

Austria gets first taste of collegiate play

SAIPAN TRIBUNE
Thaiphi Austria, seen here taking a shot during a game in the M-League last year at the NMI Soccer Training Center, played in his first collegiate match for Trine University last Monday.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI's Thaiphi Austria suited up for his first match in the collegiate ranks after playing for Trine University in an exhibition game against Huntington University last Monday.

Austria, a many-time national team member, made it to the Thunder's starting unit and the Angola, Indiana-based school eked out a 3-2 win over the Foresters.

"It feels great to be able to start for my first collegiate game. The competition here compared to the league back home is very different. After my first match, I am excited for the upcoming games," said Austria, who plays outside back, but his coaches put him on the left in the majority of the match.

The 19-year-old athlete said that matches this semester will all be exhibition and training

See AUSTRIA on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
In this 2018 file photo, Thaiphi Austria, left second row, joins other starters for the CNMI U16 National Team for a group photo before their game against Luen Thai Soccer School in the Inaugural Tuloy XO Cup at the Tuloy XO Field in Alabang, Philippines.